

THE
COURTIERS
Manual Oracle,
OR, THE
ART
OF
PRUDENCE.

Written Originally in Spanish,
By *BALTAZAR GRACIAN*.
And now done into English.

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THE
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Manual
OF THE
ART
OF
RUBBING

Revised.

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T H E

Preface.

THe Courtiers Manual Oracle, *which is here presented to the Reader, as it is an abridgment of all the works of that judicious and learned Spaniard Baltazar Gracian ; so it carries in its own Title an abridgment of it self, as not onely pointing at the subject it treats of, but also the persons for whose use it is designed.*

Oracles are the glimmerings of a supernatural light, which do rather dazle than illuminate those who are not both attentive, and sharp sighted : And therefore the Maximes

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which here bear that name, are not calculated for all degrees of Men, nor for all sorts of Understandings. There is an art of short speaking, no less than that of short hand-writing, and both are obscure, but to the intelligent and thinking, who may draw considerable advantage from both. It's an old saying; A word's enough to the Wise; and he that cannot crack the shell, and taste the kernel of a sentence, though he may be wise in his own Eyes, will never be reckoned so in the judgment of Sages. A Proverb partly applied and well understood, makes a deeper impression upon the minds of understanding men, than a lank declamation adorned with all the Posies and Flowers of Rhetorick. This made the learned and discerning Authour affect a certain vigorous laconicism in all his writings, that made him highly esteemed

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med by the greatest men of his own Countrey, and of Strangers also who understood his language, though the French Authour Des Entretiens d' Ariste & Eugene, a leading Critick accounts him unintelligible, and by consequent untranslatable; but whether he be so or not in this translation, it is left to the judgment of the Reader.

It may be made a Probleme, perhaps, by some, whether The Art of Prudence, be at this time seasonably or not translated and published in English; seeing to instruct and not to instruct, has great affinity with the answering and not answering a fool in his folly, according to Solomon, and all the World are satisfied, that there is a vast number of more than ordinary fools, and mad men amongst us at present. The title and design of the Book, I think, may salve the doubt; for

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it is the Courtiers Manual Oracle, not of him onely who has the honour to be actually in that station; but of others also, who by knowing, and reflecting upon the transactions of the world, may be capable, if not to serve the Publick, yet to live like men in their generation, and to such it cannot be unseasonable, if they have the ingenuity to act according to its maximes, seeing in so doing they will find by experience, that when once the ground is well known, one may hit the Jack with a Boul that runs streight, if it be their custome to bowl so, as well as with that which fetches the greatest compass by its bias; and that a man may be a Politician successfully, and with applause, without forsaking the rational Rules of Morality and Religion, for the deceitfull Sophistry of Cunning and Artifice, which commonly soon or too late
• *shews*

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shews its own perniciousness by the fatal disappointments of those that practise it. For the unintelligent and head-strong Mobile, that makes the greatest part of Mankind, they have nothing to doe with this Book; Odi profanum vulgus & arceo: The Authour wrote not for them, well knowing that their inveterate folly is not to be cured but restrained; and that as it is very easie by force of words and long-winded Cant, to preach them out of their senses, so it is as impossible by short documents to sentence them into their Wits and good Manners again, as to cure a Chronical Hypochondriacy by an Aphorism of Hippocrates, or a spell of Seneca's or Plutarch's Morals. To these Animals then for whom the Bit and Bridle is designed, the Discipline of the Whip is the best Doctrine, and nothing of this nature can be seasonable or unseasonable.

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seasonable, but as it may influence those of the smaller number, who are their Riders, and spur them at their pleasure ; Now if these be so mad as to run upon precipices, and ride over Rocks, those Maximes can in this onely be unseasonable ; that they seasonably taught them, what too late, and unseasonably they were convinced of.

Vale.

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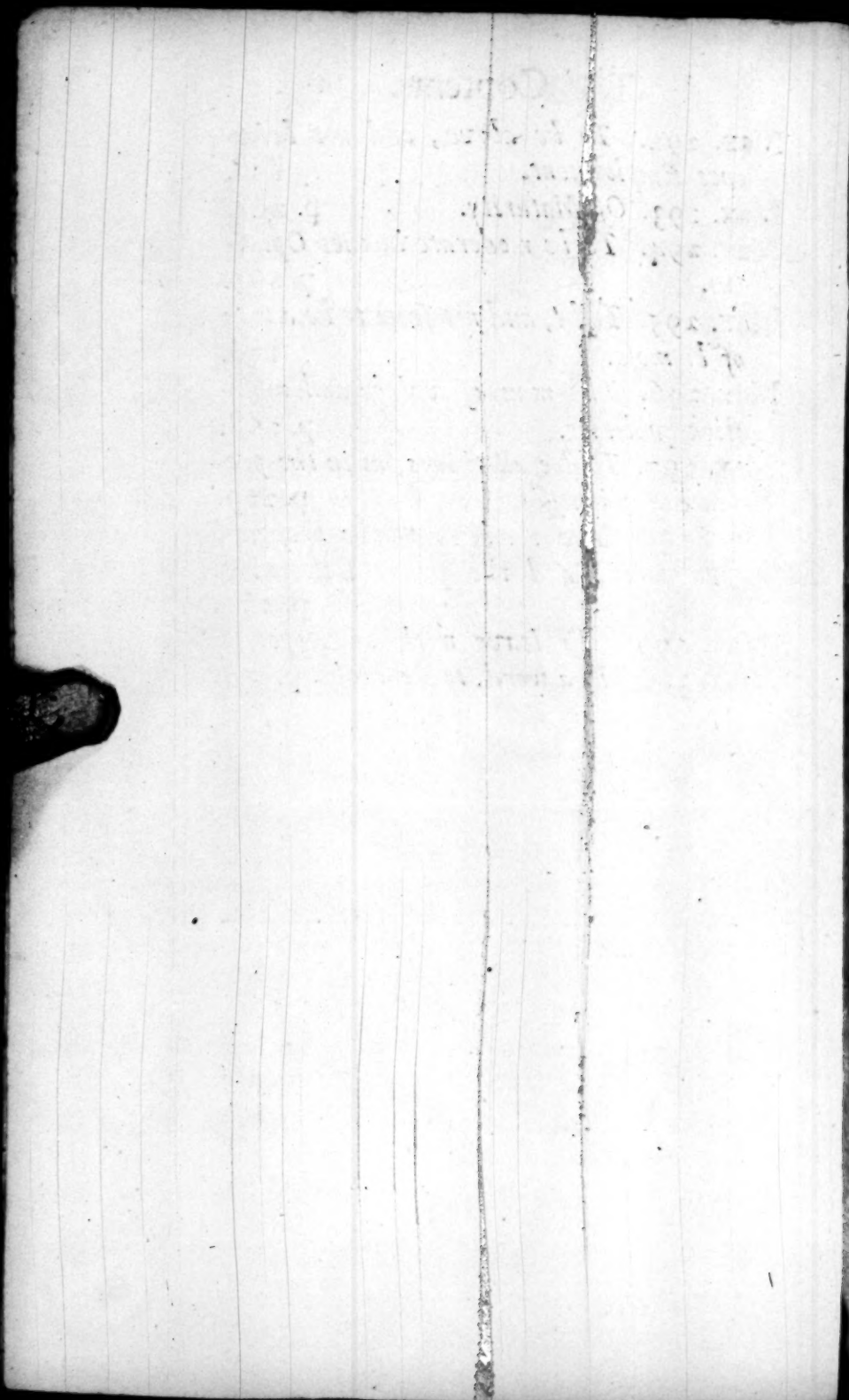
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Judgment, and the quaint Diſcerning.*
p. 270.

Max. 299. *To leave with an Appetite,*

Max. 300. *In a word, to be Holy.* p. 271.



THE
COURTIER'S
MANUAL ORACLE,
OR, THE
ART of PRUDENCE.

MAXIME I.

Every thing is now at the point of its perfection, and an able Man at the highest pitch thereof.

THERE goes more to the making up of one Wise Man now a-days, than in Ancient Times of seven: And at present there is more sense required for treating with one single Person, than heretofore with a whole Nation.

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MAXIME II.

Wit and a Genius

Are two Qualities wherein the Capacity of a Man consists. To have one without the other, is to be happy but by halves. It is not enough to have a good understanding, there must be a *Genius* also to accompany it. It is commonly the ill luck of weak or awkward People to be mistaken in the choice of their Profession, of their Friends, and of the place of their Residence.

MAXIME III.

Not to be too free, nor open.

It is the *Admiration* of Novelty that makes events to be valued. (There is neither pleasure nor profit in playing ones Game too openly. Not to declare immediately, is the way to hold minds in suspense, especially in matters of importance, which are the object of universal expectation. That makes every thing to be thought a mystery, and the secret of that raises veneration. In the manner of expression one ought to have a care not to be

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be too plain: and to speak with open heart is not always convenient in conversation.) Silence is the Sanctuary of Prudence. A resolution made manifest was never esteemed. He that declares himself, is obnoxious to Censure: and if he succeeds not, he is doubly miserable. We ought then to imitate the method of God Almighty, who always holds men in suspense.

MAXIME IV.

Knowledge and Valour club to the making of great Men.

These are two qualities which render Men immortal, because they themselves are so. No man is great but in so far as he knows: and when he knows, he can do all things. Man that knows nothing, is the World in darkness. Prudence and Strength are his Eyes and Hands. Knowledge is barren, if Valour do't accompany it.

MAXIME V.

To be always usefull.

It is not the Guilder but the Adorer that makes the God. A Man of Parts had rather meet with those who depend upon him, than that are thankfull to him. To keep People in hope, is Civility; to trust to their Gratitude, Simplicity. For it is as common for Gratitude to be forgetfull, as for Hope to be mindfull. You get always more by this; than by the other. When one hath once drank, he turns his back upon the Well: so soon as the Orange is squeezed, it's thrown upon the ground, When Dependance ceaseth, there's an end of Correspondence, and of Esteem also. It is therefore a lesson of Experience, that a Man ought to endeavour always to render himself usefull, nay even to his Prince; though he must not affect an excess of silence, to make others overshoot themselves, nor for his own interest render another man's evil incurable.

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MAXIME VI.

Man at the height of his perfection.

He is not born complete; but dayly improves in his Manners and Employment, untill at length he arrive at the point of Consummation. Now these are the marks by which we may know an accomplished Man: a quaint perception, readiness in discerning, solidity of judgment, tractableness of will, and circumspection in words and actions. Some never attain to that pitch, there is somewhat always wanting: and others arrive at it, but late.

MAXIME VII.

To have a care not to outdoe ones Master.

All Superiority is odious, but in a Subject over his Prince, it is ever foolish, or fatal. An accomplished man conceals vulgar advantages, as a modest Woman hides her Beauty under a negligent dress. There are many who will yield in good fortune, or in good humour; but no body will yield in Wit, and least of all a Sovereign. Wit is the *King* of Attributes, and by

6 *The Courtiers Manual Oracle, or,*
consequent, every Offence against it, is
no less a Crime than Treason. Sovereigns would be witty in all things that are most eminent. Princes are willing to be assisted, but not surpassed. Those who advise them, ought to speak, as if they put them in mind of what they forgot, and not as teaching them what they knew not. This is a lesson that the Stars reade to us, which though they be the sparkling Children of the Sun, yet never appear in his presence.

MAXIME VIII.

A Man never taken in passion

Is a mark of the sublimest reach of wit, seeing thereby a man puts himself above all vulgar impressions. (It is the greatest of Dominions to rule ones self and passions. That is the triumph of free will.) If passion ever seize the mind, let it be without prejudice to our employment, especially if it be considerable. That's the way to prevent much vexation, and to gain a high reputation.

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MAXIME IX.

To falsifie the defects of ones Nation.

Water imbibes the good or bad qualities of the Minerals through which it passes, and Man those of the Climates where he is born. Some are more obliged than others to their Countrey, in that they have met with a more favourable constellation in it. There is no Nation how Polite soever, but hath some original failing, which their Neighbours, either out of caution or emulation censure. It is the victory of an able man to correct, or at least bely the censure of these failings. Thereby one acquires the glorious renown of being singular, and that exemption from a common fault is the more esteemed, that no body expects it. There are also Family-defects, defects of Profession, Employment and Age, which concurring all together in one and the same subject, render it an unsupportable Monster, if they be not timely prevented.

MAXIME X.

Fortune and Renown.

The one is as fickle, as the other firm and constant. The first serves during life, and the other after death. The one resists Envy, and the other Oblivion. Fortune is courted, and sometimes obtained by the help of Friends. Renown is gained by Industry. The desire of Reputation springs from Virtue. Renown hath been and is the Sister of Giants: it is always upon the extremes either of Applause or Execration.

MAXIME XI.

To converse with those from whom one may learn.

Familiar Conversation ought to be the School of Learning and breeding. A man is to make his Masters of his Friends, seasoning the pleasure of conversing with the profit of instruction. Betwixt Men of Wit the advantage is reciprocal. They who speak are rewarded with the applause that is given to what they say; and those who hear, with the profit they receive from

from it. Our own interest inclines us to conversation. A man of sense frequents the company of good Courtiers, whose Houses are rather the Theatres of Heroism, than the Palaces of vanity. There are some men who besides their being Oracles themselves, that instruct others by their Example, are also so happy, that their Retinue is an Academy of Prudence and Breeding.

MAXIME XII.

Nature and Art: Matter and the Artist.

There is no Beauty without help, nor perfection that is not apt to fall into barbarity, if Art lend not an helping hand. Art corrects what is bad, and perfects what is good. Nature commonly denies us the best, to the end we may have recourse to Art. The best Nature without Art is but a Wilderness: and how great soever a Man's Talents may be, unless they be cultivated, they are but half-talents. Without Art a man knows nothing as he ought to do, and is Clownish in every thing he sets about.)

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MAXIME XIII.

To proceed sometimes cunningly, sometimes candidly.

Man's life is a conflict with the malice of man himself. An expert man for Weapons uses the strategems of intention. He never does what he seems to have a mind to doe. He takes an aim, but that is to deceive the Eyes that look upon him. He blurts out a word in the air, and then does a thing that no body dreamt of. If he come out with a saying, it is to amuse the attention of his Rivals, and whilst that is taken up in considering what he drives at, he presently acts what never came into their thoughts. He then, that takes heed not to be imposed upon, prevents the cunning of his Companion by good reflexions. He always understands the contrary of what one would have him to understand, and thereby he immediately discovers the falsitie. He lets the first pass goe, and expects the second or third with a good guard. And when afterwards his Artifice is known, he refines his dissimulation, making use of truth it self to deceive by. To change his cunning, he changes his ground and battery.

battery. His Artifice is to have no more Art, and all his subtilty is to pass from Dissimulation to Candour. He, who observes it with a piercing Eye, knowing the Arts of his Rival, stands upon his guard, and discovers darkness under a veil of light. He unscuddles a procedure the more mysterious, that every thing in it is sincere. And thus the wiles of *Pytho* engage the candour of *Apollo*.

MAXIME XIV.

The thing and the manner of the thing.

The substance is not enough, unless it be cloathed with its circumstances. An ill way spoils all, it even disfigures Justice and Reason. On the contrary, a gracefull way supplies all defects, it guilds a denial, sweetens the sharpness that is in truth, and smoothes the wrinkles of old age. The *How* does much in all things. A free and disengaged way charms the minds of men, and makes the complete Ornament of life.

This Maxime is taken out of the third Chapter of the Anthours Discreet, Del modo y Agrado. And seeing that Chapter is very instructive, the Reader, I hope, will not take it ill to have here an abstract of it.

For

For this great Precept, says he, *Cleobulus* got the Reputation of the chief of the Wise Men. And, indeed, it is the chief of Precepts. But if to teach it was sufficient for procuring the name of a Wise Man, nay, and of the chief of the Sages, what remains for him that shall put it in practice? For to know things, and not to practise them, is not to be a Philosopher but a Grammarian.

In all things the circumstance is as necessary as the substance, nay, and more. The thing that first presents to us, is not the essence, but the appearance. By the outside we come to the knowledge of what is within. By the bark of the manner we discern the fruit of the substance: insomuch that we judge of Persons whom we know not by their deportment.

The way and manner is that part of merit which most affects the attention. And seeing it is to be acquired, he that is without it is inexcusable.

Truth has force; Reason authority; and Justice power: but they are without luster if the gracefull way be wanting; as with it every thing is set off with more advantage. It makes amends for all things, even for the defects of reason; it guilds flights, paints deformities, hides
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imperfections, and in a word, disguises every thing.

Great Zeal in a Minister; Valour in a Commander; learning in a Scholar; Power in a Prince; are not enough, unless these qualities be accompanied with that important formality. But it is in no employment more necessary, than in Sovereign Command. To be humane rather than despotick is in Superiours a singular way to engage. To see a Prince make Superiority yield to Humanity, obliges Subjects upon a double account to love him. He must reign in the first place over the wills of men, and then over the rest. Conciliate to thy self the good will, and even the applause of all men, if not out of inclination, at least by art. For they who admire, mind not whether thy way be natural or adventitious.

There are many things which are worth but little in themselves, and yet are esteemed for their manner. By the help of that old things become new, and return into fashion. If the circumstances be of common use, they palliate the uncouthness of Antiquity. The relish of men advances always, and never recoils. What is past takes not, and nothing but what is new pleases it. Nevertheless, a little change may beguile it. Circumstances
make.

14 *The Courtiers Manual Oracle, or,*
make things grow young again, they
cure them of the musty scent, and the
mouldiness of *Too often*, which is always
intolerable, and especially in imitations,
which can never rise neither to the height,
nor Novelty of the Original.

This is still more obvious to be seen in
the functions of the mind. For though
things be very well known, yet they ne-
ver fail to raise the Appetite, if the Ora-
tour and Historian hit upon a new way
of saying or writing them.

When things are exquisite, they cloy
not, though they be even seven times re-
peated. But though they be not tedious,
yet they are not admired. And there-
fore it is necessary to season them, other-
wise to the end they may excite atten-
tion. Novelty caresses and charms the
Palate. And objects are renewed merely
by changing the Ragoes, which is the true
art of pleasing.

Two men shall say the very same
things, and yet the one shall please, and
the other by the same means offend. So
important it is to know the way *how* !
So usefull is a gracefull manner, and so
hurtfull an unseemly ! Now if the want
of a manner be so remarkable, what
must that be which is actually bad, and
designedly offensive, and especially in
those

those that hold a publick Post? Thy Clownish Air is but a small defect, said a Wise Man, and yet it is enough to make all people disgust thee. On the contrary, an external agreeableness promises a suitability of mind; and beauty vouches for good humour.

(The gracefull manner so guilds and sets off a *No*, as to make it more esteemed than an ill seasoned *Tea*.) It so skilfully sugar's over truths, that they pass for blandishments: and sometimes when it seems to flatter, it undeceives, by telling People not what they are, but what they ought to be.

MAXIME XV.

To make use of Auxiliary-wits.

The happiness of great men consists in having witty men about them, who clear them from the difficulties of ignorance, by disentangling their affairs. To entertain Wise Men, is a grandeur surpassing the barbarous haughtiness of that same *Tigranes*, who prided himself in being served by Kings, whom he had conquered. (It is a new kind of Dominion to make those our Servants by Art, whom Nature hath made our Masters. Man has

16. *The Courtiers Manual Oracle, or,*
has much to know, and but a short while
to live; and he lives not at all, if he
know nothing at all. It is therefore a
singular piece of skill to study without
pains, and to learn much, by learning
of all. When that is once done, you
shall see a man speak in a publick Assem-
bly with the wit of many; or rather,
you hear as many Sages speaking by his
mouth, as have before instructed him.
Thus, the labours of others make him
pass for an Oracle, seeing these Sages fit
his Lesson for him, and distill into him
the quintessence of their knowledge. Af-
ter all, let him who cannot have Wisdom
for a Servant, endeavour at least to have
it for a Companion.)

MAXIME XVI.

(Knowledge and a right intention.

Both these together are the source of
good successes. A good Understanding
with a bad Will, make a monstrous Mar-
riage. An ill intention is the poison of
Humane life, and is the more mischie-
vous when backed by knowledge. That's
an unlucky Wit which is employed to doe
evil. Learning destitute of true judg-
ment is double folly.)

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MAXIME XVII.

Not to follow always one and the same Conduct.

It is good to vary, that you may frustrate the Curiosity, especially of those who envy you. For if they come to observe an uniformity in your actions, they will prevent your enterprizes, and by consequent make them miscarry.) It is easie to shoot a Fowl that flies out-right, but not a Bird which is irregular in its flight. Yet it is not good to be always upon the intrigue neither ; for at second bound the cunning will be discovered. Jealousie is upon the watch ; there is much skill required to guard against it. (A cunning Gamester never plays the Card which his Adversary expects, and far less that which he desires.)

MAXIME XVIII.

Application and Genius.

No body can be eminent without both these. When those two parts concur, they make a great man. An ordinary Wit that applies it self, goes farther than a sublime

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mind without application. Reputation is got by indefatigable labour. What costs but little, is good for nothing. Some have wanted application even in the highest employments; so rare a thing it is to force ones Genius. To have rather be indifferent in a sublime employment, than excellent in an indifferent, is a desire rendred excusable by Generosity. But he is not to be pardoned who rests satisfied to be indifferent good in a small employment, when he might excell in a great. One must have Art and a Genius then, which he is to complete by application.

MAXIME XIX.

Not to be too much blazed abroad by the noise of Fame.

It is the usual misfortune of every thing that hath been much talked of, always to come short of the perfection that men have imagined to themselves. Reality can never equal imagination, seeing it is as difficult to have all perfections, as it is easie to entertain a notion of them. Since desire is the Husband of imagination, it always conceives much more of things than they are in effect. How great soe-
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ver perfections may be, they never match the Idea of them. And as men find themselves frustrated of their expectation, so they undeceive themselves in stead of admiring. Hope always lessens the truth. And therefore Prudence ought to correct it, by qualifying it so, that the enjoyment may surpass the desire. Some beginnings of Credit serve to awaken the Curiosity, but not to endear the object of it. It is most honourable when the effect exceeds the notion and expectation. This rule holds not good in evil, wherein exaggeration serves to belie, calumniate, and detraction with the greater applause, by making that appear tolerable, which was thought to be abominable.

MAXIME XX.

Every man in his time.

People of extraordinary and eminent merit depend on the Times. All have not had the Age they deserved, and many who have met with that, have not had the happiness to make the best of it. Others have been worthy of a better Age; which is an argument, that every thing that is good, does not always triumph. Things of this world have their

20 *The Courtiers Manual Oracle, or,*
seasons, and that which is most eminent,
is obnoxious to the freakishness of Cu-
stome. But it is always the comfort of a
Wise Man, that he is Eternal. For if his
own age be ungratefull to him, those that
come after doe him Justice.

MAXIME XXI.

The Art of being happy.

There are rules of good Fortune; and
Happiness in regard of a Wise Man is not
always fortuitous. His industry can help
it forwards. Some think it enough to
stand at the Gate of Fortune in a good
posture, and expect till she open it. Others
doe better, and trusting to their confidence
or merit advance farther on, so that by cajo-
ling of Fortune, soon or late they gain her.
However, according to right Philosophy,
vertue and application are the onely Ar-
biters of a man's lot. For (as imprudence
is the source of all the crosses of life, so
Prudence is the cause of all its happiness.

MAXIME XXII.

The Man that takes.

A gentile Education is the portion of
Men

Men of Breeding. The knowledge of the Affairs of the Time, good sayings spoken to purpose, pleasant ways of doing things, make the man of fashion : and the more he excells in these things, the less he holds of the vulgar. Sometimes a sign or gesture makes deeper impression, than all the documents of a severe Master. The art of conversing hath stood in greater stead to some, than the seven liberal Arts all together.)

MAXIME XXIII.

To have no blemish.

There is no perfection without an *If*, or a *But*. There are but very few that want faults, either in manners or body. But there are a great many who are vain of the faults, which it would be easie for them to amend. When we see the smallest defect in an accomplished man, we say it's pity, because one Cloud is enough to eclipse all the Sun. These defects are blemishes at which envy levels. It would be a notable piece of skill to change them into perfections, as *Julius Caesar* did, who being bald, covered that defect under the shadow of his Laurels.

MAXIME XXIV.

To moderate ones own imagination.

The true means of living happy, and of being always esteemed Wise, is either to correct it, or confine it. Otherwise it takes a Tyrannical Empire over us, and transgressing the limits of speculation, becomes so very absolute, that life is happy, or miserable, according to the different fancies that it imprints upon us. For to some it represents nothing but pains and trouble, and through their folly becomes their Domestick Executioner. Others there are again, to whom it proposes only pleasures and grandeurs, delighting to divert them in dreams. And these are the effects of imagination, when not curb'd by reason.

MAXIME XXV.

A good Pryer.

To understand the art of reasoning and discourse, was heretofore the Science of Sciences: but that alone will not doe now a-days, we must guess and divine, and especially if we would undeceive our selves.

selves. He that is not a good Pryer can never be a good Judge. There are Spies over the heart and intentions. The truths which import us most, are never told us but by halves. A man of Wit must dive into the meaning of them, checking his credulity in what appears advantageous, and giving the reins to believe as to that which is odious !

MAXIME XXVI.

(To find out the weak side of every one.

That is the art of managing humours, and of gaining our ends upon men. It depends more upon skill than resolution to know how to win upon the minds of People. There is no will that hath not its predominant passion, and these passions are different according to the diversity of tempers. All men are Idolaters : some of honour, others of interest, and most part of their pleasures. The skill is then, to know aright these Idols, if we would hit the weak side of those who adore them. He that can doe so, has the key of another man's will.) We must move with the first mover ; and that is not always the higher, but most commonly the lower faculty. For in this world the number of those

24 *The Courtiers Manual Oracle, or,*
who are irregular, is far greater than of
those who are not. (We are first to know
the Character of the Person, next feel his
Pulse, and then attack him by his stron-
gest passion, which is his weaker side.
That is a sure way to gain the Party.)

MAXIME XXVII.

To prefer intention before extention.

Perfection consists not in quantity, but
in quality. Of all that is very good, there
is always but very little. That whereof
there is much, is little esteemed. And
even amongst men Giants pass common-
ly for real Dwarfs, (some value Books for
their bulk, as if they were made rather
to load the Arms than to exercise the
mind.) Extention alone could never ex-
ceed mediocrity. And it is the unhappiness
of men that offer at every thing, to excell
in nothing, because they would excell in
all. Intention gives an eminent rank, and
makes a Heroe, if the matter be sublime.

MAXIME XXVIII.

To have nothing that's vulgar.

He was a man of an excellent discern-
ing.

ning, whom it displeased to please many: Wise Men are never fond of vulgar Applause. There are Camelions of so popular a palate, that they take more pleasure to suck in a gross air, than to smell the sweet Zephyres of *Apollo*. Be not dazled at the sight of the miracles of the vulgar. Ignorants are always in a maze. That which makes the folly of the mobile admire, undeceives the discerning of the Wise.

MAXIME XXIX.

The upright Man.

One ought always to be on the side of Reason, and that so constantly, that neither vulgar passion, nor any tyrannical violence may be able to make him abandon the party. But where is that Phoenix of equity to be found? Sure, she has not many Adherents. There are many who publish her praises, but will not admit her into their Houses. Others follow her as far as danger will permit; but when they come to that, some like false Friends deny her; and the rest, like Politicians, pretend they know her not. She, on the contrary, scruples not to fall out with Friends, with Powers, nay, and
with

26 *The Courtiers Manual Oracle, or,*
with her own interest; and there lies the
danger of mistaking her. The cunning
stand neuter, and by a plausible and me-
taphysical subtilty, endeavour to recon-
cile their Conscience with reason of state.
But an upright man looks upon that way
of trimming as a kind of Treason, think-
ing it more honour to be constant, than
to be a Statesman. He is always where
truth is: and if he sometimes leave peo-
ple, it is not that he is fickle, but because
they have first forsaken reason.

MAXIME XXX.

*Not to affect extraordinary, nor yet Chi-
merical Employments.*

That affectation serves onely to attract
contempt. Whimsy hath hatched ma-
ny Sects: but a Wise Man ought to e-
spouse none of them. There are some
strange palates, that like nothing of what
others love. Every thing that is singu-
lar pleases them. It is true, that makes
them to be taken notice of, but rather to
be laughed at than esteemed. Nay, (those
who would be wise, ought to have a spe-
cial care not to affect to be so.) Upon far
better ground ought they, who are of a
profession, that renders the professors ri-
diculous.

diculous. We name not here the Employments, seeing the contempt that every one has of them, makes them sufficiently known.

MAXIME XXXI.

*To know happy People, to make use of them,
and the unhappy to avoid them.*

Misfortune commonly is an effect of folly: and there is not a more dangerous contagion than that of the unfortunate. We must not open the door to the least evil, for others, and those greater too, which lie in ambush come always after. The true skill at play, is to know how to *discard*. The lowest Card that turns up, is better than the highest of the former dealing. In doubts, there is no better expedient than to consult the wise: soon or late that will answer our expectation.

MAXIME XXXII.

*To have the reputation of contenting every
body.*

That gives Credit to those who Govern. By that means Sovereigns gain
the

28 *The Courtiers Manual Oracle, or,*
the good will of the publick. The onely
advantage they have, is, that they can
doe more good than other men. Those
are the truest Friends who are made by
reiterated Amities. But there are some of
a humour of contenting no body, not so
much because that would be chargeable
to them, as that their Nature is averse
from shewing kindness. In all things
contrary to Divine Bounty, which com-
municates it self incessantly.

MAXIME XXXIII.

To know how to be a denied Man.

If it be a great art to know how to re-
fuse favours, it is a far greater to be able to
deny ones self in business and visits. There
are some troublesome employments that
corrode the most pretious time. It is bet-
ter to doe nothing at all, than to be busie
to no purpose. It is not enough to be a
prudent man, to make no intrigues, but
he must also avoid to meddle in them.
We must not be so much at the devotion
of others, as not to be more at our own.)
We are not to abuse Friends, nor to re-
quire more of them than they are willing
to grant. Every thing that is excessive is
vitious, especially in conversation: and
with.

without that moderation there is no preserving of the good will and esteem of others, on which Civil Decency depends. One should use all his liberty in chusing what is most excellent, but so, as he never offend against judgment and discretion.

MAXIME XXXIV.

To know ones own strength.

That knowledge serves to cultivate the excellent and improve common endowments. Many would have become great men, had they known their true Talent. Strive then to know thine own, and join to it application. In some judgment has the advantage, and in others courage: most part lay a constraint upon their Genius: whence it is that they never excell in any thing. (One is late in forsaking what passion made him early espouse.)

MAXIME XXXV.

To weigh things according to their just value.

It is the onely ruine of Fools, that they never consider. Seeing they do not comprehend things, they neither see the damage,

30 *The Courtiers Manual Oracle, or,*
mage, nor profit, and by consequent trouble themselves not about them. Some set a great value upon that which is but of little worth, because they take all things the backward way. Many for want of sense, feel not their distemper. There are some things on which one cannot think too much. The wise man reflects on all, but not on all alike. For he dives where there is any ground, and sometimes he thinks there is more in the thing than he thinks of: So that his reflexion goes as far as his apprehension went.

MAXIME XXXVI.

Not to engage in any enterprise before one hath examined his own fortune and ability.

This experience is far more necessary than the knowledge of our constitution. If it be the mark of a Fool to begin at forty years of age, to consult *Hipocrates* about his health: He is a far greater Fool, who begins at that age, to go to the School of *Seneca*, to learn how to live. It is no small point to know how to govern ones fortune, whether it be in waiting till she be in the good humour: (for

(for she loves to be waited on) or in taking her such as she offers. For she hath an ebbing and flowing, and it is impossible to fix her, being so irregular and variable as she is. Let him who hath often found her favourable, not desist from importuning her, because it is usual with her to declare for the bold, and being courtly, to love the young. Let him who is unhappy withdraw, that he may not meet with the affront of a double repulse, in presence of a happy rival.

MAXIME XXXVII.

(To guess at the meaning of the little hints that are given us by the bye, and to know how to make the best of them.)

This is the delicatest part in humane conversation; it is the finest probe of the recesses of the heart of man. There are some malicious and angry jirks dart in the gall of passion: and these are imperceptible Thunder-bolts, that strike down those whom they smite. Many times a word hath thrown down headlong from the pinnacle of favour, those whom the murmurings of a whole people combined against them could not so much as shake. There are other words or hints which

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produce an effect quite contrary, that's to say, which support and encrease the reputation of those to whom they are addressed. But seeing they are cunningly glanced, so also are they to be cautiously received. For the security consists in smelling out the intention, and the blow foreseen is always warded.

MAXIME XXXVIII.

To be moderate in good fortune

Is the part of a good Gamester, when Reputation lies at stake. A brave Retreat is as great as a brave Enterprize. When one hath acted great exploits, he ought to secure the glory of them, by drawing off in time. A continued Prosperity is always suspected. That which hath its interruptions is the surer. A little sharp with the sweet makes it relish better. The more Prosperities crowd one upon another, the more slippery they are, and subject to a reverse. The quality of the pleasure makes sometimes amends for the shortness of the enjoyment. Fortune is weary to carry one and the same man always upon her shoulders.

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34 *The Courtiers Manual Oracle, or,*
merit is not enough, though, in reality, it
be easie to gain the affection, when one
hath once gained the esteem. He that
would be beloved, must love, be benefi-
cent, give good words, and still shew
better effects. Courtesie is the politick
magick of great Persons. One must first
set his hand to great affairs, and then open
it liberally to good Pens : alternately em-
ploy the Sword and the Paper. For the
favour of Writers who perpetuate great
Exploits is to be courted.

MAXIME XLI.

Never to Exaggerate.

Never to speak in Superlatives, is a sign
of a Wise Man. For that way of spea-
king always wounds either Truth or Pru-
dence. Exaggerations are so many prosti-
tutions of Reputation, in that they disco-
ver the weakness of understanding, and
the bad discerning of him that speaks.
Excessive Praises excite Curiosity, and in-
cite to Envy. So that if merit answer
not the value that is set upon it, as it
commonly happens ; general opinion re-
volts against the imposture, and makes
the flatterer and flattered both ridiculous.
And therefore a prudent man proceeds
with

with a close rein, and chuses rather to offend by giving too little, than too much. Excellence is rare, and by consequent the value of it is to be well weighed. Exaggeration is a kind of lying: by Exaggeration one gets himself the reputation of a man of bad discerning, and which is worse, of little judgment.

MAXIME XLII:

Of the Ascendant.

This is a certain unaccountable force of Superiority that springs from the Nature; and not from the Artifice, nor affectation of him that has it. Every one submits thereto without knowing how, unless it be that one yields to the insinuating power of the natural authority of another. These Paramount Genies are Kings by merit, and Lions by a privilege that is born with them. They command the Heart and Tongues of others by a secret Charm, that makes them be respected. When such men have the other requisite qualities, they are cut out for the chief movers of the Government Politick, in respect they can doe more with a hint, than others with all their efforts and reasons.

This Empire, saith the Authour, in the Chapter *Del senorio en el dezir*, &c. is skotched out by nature, and finished by art. All who have that advantage, find things ready done to their hands. Nay, Superiority it self facilitates all things to them, insomuch^d that nothing puzzles them, but in every thing they come off with Honour. Their sayings and actions seem as great again as they are. An ordinary thing hath even appeared excellent, when seconded by that Empire. They who want that Superiority, enter diffidently upon affairs: which takes from them much of their gracefulness, especially if it be observed. From diffidence immediately springs fear, which shamefully banishes assurance; and by consequent action and reason loose all their lustre. That fear so absolutely Tyrannizes over the mind, that it deprives it of all liberty. Insomuch that reason is at a stand, words are frozen, and activity remains under an interdict.

The Ascendant of him that speaks, gains him at first the respect of him who hears. It makes the greatest Critick give attention, and Sovereignly sways the consent of a whole Company. It furnishes expressions, nay, and sentences to the person that speaks: whereas fear
choaks

choaks the words. Timidity is sufficient to chill reasoning : and though it could overflow with a Torrent of Eloquence, yet the great cold of fear will put a stop to its course.

He that with Native Authority enters into Conversation, has respect at his Devotion before hand : But he who comes to it with fear, accuses himself of weakness, and confesses he is overcome : for which diffidence of mind he is despised, or at best not much esteemed of others. The truth is, a wise man ought to be reserved, and particularly when he is not acquainted with his company. He first tries the foard, but especially if he foresee that it is deep.

Though it be both Civility and Duty to qualifie this imperious boldness, in speaking to Princes and great men ; yet one must have a care of falling into the extremity of discomposing bashfulness. There it is that a man ought to keep a mean betwixt boldness and confusion, that he may neither be disagreeable nor ridiculous. Let neither thy fear be so great, as to make thee lose assurance ; nor thy boldness so sawcy, as to forget respect.

That Superiority glisters in all sorts of people, but much more in great men. In

an Oratour it is more than one circumstance : It's essential to a Lawyer ; In an Ambassadour it is a glorious Quality ; and a victorious Attribute in a Commander : but in a Prince it is the Ornament of perfection. It raises the price of all humane actions ; and reaches even the countenance, which is the throne of comeliness ; and the gate also in such a manner, that the steps of a man are the signatures of the character of his heart ; and judicious persons delineate theirs by a noble way of acting and speaking. For sublime actions are of double value, when they are accompanied with majesty.

Some are born with an universal power in all that they say and doe. One would say that nature had made them the elder brothers of mankind. They are designed to be Superiours in all things, if not in Dignity, at least in Merit. A spirit of Dominion exerts it self in them, even in their most common actions. All obey them, because in every thing they excell. They rob the hearts, and so at first become the masters of others ; for their capacity is large enough for all things. And though there may be others sometimes that have more learning, nobility, nay, and virtue ; yet still they get the better on't by an Ascendant, that gives them the
Su-

Superiority ; so that if they be not in the right, yet at least they make good their title by possession.

MAXIME XLIII.

To speak with the Vulgar, but to think with the Wise.

To go against the stream, is a thing wherein it is as impossible to succeed, as it is easie to be exposed to danger. *Socrates* was the onely man that could undertake it. Contradiction passes for an affront, because it is a condemning of the Judgment of another. Malecontents multiply, sometimes because of the thing that is censured ; and sometimes because of the Party that it had. Truth is known but of a very few, and false Opinions go current with the rest of the world. One must not judge of a wise man by what he says, seeing sometimes he speaks at second hand, that's to say, according to the common voice, though his judgment give the lie to the vulgar error. A wise man shuns as much to be contradicted, as to contradict. The more his judgment enclines him to censure, the more he has a care not to publish it. Opinion is free ; it neither can nor ought to

40 *The Courtiers Manual Oracle, or,*
be forced. The wise man retires within
the Sanctuary of his silence, and if some-
times he be communicative, it is but to a
few, and those the Wise.

MAXIME XLIV.

To sympathize with great men.

It is the quality of a Heroe to love a
Heroe ; it is a secret instinct that nature
bestows upon those whom she intends to
conduct to Heroism. There is a kind-
red of hearts and inclinations, and the
effects of it are by the vulgar attributed
to enchantment. That sympathy rests
not at esteem, it proceeds to good will,
and at length arrives at affection : it per-
suades without speaking, and obtains
without recommendation. There is an
active and a passive, and the more sublime,
the more happy they are. The skill lies
in knowing, distinguishing, and under-
standing how to make the best use of
them. Without that inclination the rest
is good for nothing.

MAX.

MAXIME XLV.

To use Reflexion without abusing it.

Reflexion ought neither to be affected nor known, Artifice is to be hid, in as much as it is suspicious, and all caution more, because it is odious. If Cheating be in vogue; double your vigilance, but without making it known, lest that make people distrustfull. Suspicion provokes to revenge, and sets men upon thoughts of doing the hurt, that they never thought on before. Reflexion upon the state of affairs, is a great help in acting. There is not a better proof of a man of sense, than to be reflexive. The greatest perfection of actions depends on the full knowledge with which they have been executed.

MAXIME XLVI.

To correct ones Antipathy.

It is our custome to hate right or wrong, that's to say, even before we know what he is, whom we hate; and sometimes that vulgar aversion, has the boldness to attack great persons. Prudence
ought

42 *The Courtiers Manual Oracle, or,*
ought to keep it under. For nothing dis-
credits us more, than to hate those who
deserve to be beloved. As it is noble to
sympathize with Heroes, so is it disgrace-
full to have antipathy against them.

MAXIME XLVII.

To shun Engagements

Is one of the chief Maximes of Pru-
dence. In large places there is always
great distance from one end to the other.
It is the same in great affairs. We must
jog on a good way before we come to
see the end of them. And therefore the
wise engage not willingly therein. They
come to a rupture as late as possibly they
can, seeing it is easier to wave the occa-
sion, than to get off, if engaged with
honour. There are temptations of judg-
ment, which it is safer to avoid, than to
overcome. One Engagement draws a
greater after it, and commonly there is a
precipice hard by. Some men naturally,
and sometimes through a national fault,
meddle in every thing, and engage incon-
siderately. But he that takes reason for
his Guide, proceeds always with circum-
spection. He finds greater advantage in
not engaging, than in overcoming : and
though

though some rash blockhead may be ready to begin, yet he has a care not to make a second.

MAXIME XLVIII.

The man of a good Stock.

The more depth one hath, the more man he is. The inside ought to be worth as much again as what appears outwardly. Some men have no more but a front, just like Houses, which for want of a good foundation, have not been finished. The entry speaks the Palace, and the Cottage the Lodging. These men have nothing that one can fix upon, or rather every thing is fixed with them. For after the first salutation the conversation is at an end. They make their complement of entry, as the Sicilian Horses their Caracols, and then all of a sudden are dumb. For words are soon drained when the Understanding is shallow. It is easie for them to deceive others, who like themselves have nothing but a shew; but they are fops to men of discerning, who presently discover that they are empty within.

MAX-

MAXIME XLIX.

The judicious and penetrating man

Masters objects, and is never mastered by them. He presently sounds the bottom of the profoundest depth. He knows very well how to make the Anatomy of mens capacities. Let him but look upon a man, and he'll dive into the depth of him, and know him thoroughly. He deciphers all the secrets of the closest heart. He is quick in conceiving, severe in censuring, and judicious in drawing his consequences. He discovers all, observes all, and comprehends all.

That and the preceding Maxime have their Commentary in the Authours Discreet, ch. Hombre Juizioso y notante, where thus he speaks.

Momus reasoned but very dully, when he would have had a little Window to be made in the heart of Man. It would be of very little use to some men, who look through perspective glasses. A good judgment is the principal key of another man's heart. It is to no purpose for ignorance to retreat into the Sanctuary of silence, and Hypocrisie into a whited Sepulchre, a judicious man discovers all,
guesses

guesſes at all, and penetrates into all. He at firſt diſtinguiſhes appearance from reality, He looks into the inſide, and reſts not on the vulgar ſurface. He decipherſ the intentions and ends ; for the key of Criticizing is in his poſſeſſion. Seldom hath deceit, and far leſs ignorance bragg'd of being too hard for him. That pre-eminence hath rendred *Tacitus* ſo famous in the particular, and *Seneca* ſo eſteemed in the common. There is no quality more oppoſite to vulgar ignorance than this : it is ſufficient alone to gain a man the reputation of diſcreet. The vulgar hath always been malicious, but never judicious : And though it ſays any thing, yet it underſtands not every thing. It ſeldom diſtinguiſhes truth from probability. Seeing it never bites but the bark, it ſwallows down all, without nauſeating a lie. *And about two pages after.* A yea from thoſe judges of merit and capacity, is worth more than all the acclamations of a people. And it was not without ground, that *Plato* called *Ariſtote* his whole School ; and *Antigonus* the Philoſopher *Zeno*, the whole ſum of his Renown.) But it is to be obſerved that there is great difference betwixt cenſure and backbiting For the one is grounded upon indifference, and the other upon malice.

46 *The Courtiers Manual Oracle, or,*
malice. Our Aphorism enjoins not a discreet man to be satyrical, but to be intelligent : it prescribes not the condemning of every thing, which would be an insupportable extravagance of mind ; but far less the approving all things, which is the silliest piece of Pedantry.

MAXIME L.

Never to lose the respect which is due to ones self.

One ought to be such, as to have no cause of blushing in private. His own Conscience ought to be a sufficient rule of his Actions. A good man is more obliged to his own severity, than to all Precepts. He refrains to doe what is indifferent, for fear of wounding his own modesty, rather than offending against the Authority of his Superiours. When one stands in awe of himself, he stands in no need of *Seneca's* imaginary Tutor.

MAXIME LI.

The man of a good choice.

A good choice supposes a good discerning and good sense. Wit and Study are not
not

not sufficient to make a happy life. There is no perfection, where there is nothing to be chosen. To be able to chuse, and to chuse well, are the two advantages of a good discerning. Many who have a pregnant and fertile wit, a strong judgment, and much knowledge acquired by study, are at a loss when they are to make a choice: it is fatal to them to hit upon the worst, and one would say, that they loved to deceive themselves. It is then one of the greatest gifts of Heaven, to be a man of a good choice.

MAXIME LII.

Never to be disordered.

It is a great point always to be master of ones self. A man thereby becomes excellent, and has the heart of a King, seeing it is very difficult to shake a great Soul. Passions are the Elementary humours of the mind: so soon as these humours exceed, the mind becomes sick; and if the distemper rise to the mouth, Reputation is much in danger. One ought therefore so to get the mastery over himself, that he may never be accused of transport, neither in the height of prosperity, nor in the worst of adversity; but on the contrary make himself be admired as invincible.

MAX-

MAXIME LIII.

Diligent and intelligent.

Diligence executes speedily what intelligence projects slowly. Precipitancy is the passion of fools, who not being able to discover the danger, act at hap-hazard. On the contrary, the wise trespas in slowness, the common effect of reflexion. Sometimes delay makes a well concerted enterprise to miscarry. Speedy execution is the mother of good Fortune. He hath done much, who hath left nothing to be done till to morrow. It's a saying worthy of *Augustus : Festina lentè, (make haste slowly.*

MAXIME LIV.

To be a man of metal.

When the Lion is dead, the Beasts are not afraid. Brave men are not to be jeasted with. If one resist not the first time, he'll far less resist the second, and it grows still worse and worse. For the same difficulty that in the beginning might have been surmounted, is greater in the end. The vigour of mind surpasses that
of

of the body, it must always be in a readiness, as well as the Sword, to be made use of when occasion serves. By that means we gain respect. Many men have had eminent qualities, who for want of a good heart, have been looked upon as dead, seeing they have been buried alive in the obscurity of contempt. It is not without reason that Nature hath given Bees both honey and a sting, and the body of man also both nerves and bones. The mind then, must also have some mixture of sweetness and resolution.

MAXIME LV.

The man that can wait with patience.

Never to be too forward nor passionate, is the sign of a free and unconfined heart. He that is master of himself, will soon be of others. We must traverse the large carriere of time, before we come to the centre of occasion. (A rational temporizing ripens secrets and resolutions.) The crutch of time does more business than the Club of *Hercules*. God himself when he punishes us, makes not use of the rod, but of the season. It was a good saying of *Philip the second of Spain*: *Time and I are good enough for other two.* Nay.
E For-

50 *The Courtiers Manual Oracle, or,*
Fortune rewards with interest those who
have the patience to wait for her.

The Authour in the third Chapter of his
Discreet, having given an allegorical de-
scription of the triumphant Chariot of
Expectation, drawn by *Remora's*, and of
her Throne made of the shell of a *Tor-
toise*; and having told, how that Chariot
was on a day attacked by a Squadron of
Monsters, which were blind passion, un-
discreet engagement, imprudent haste,
fool-hardiness, inconsideration, precipita-
tion and confusion: *Expectation*, says
he, knowing the greatness of the danger,
commanded *Retention* to make halt;
and *Dissimulation* to amuse the Enemies,
whilst she should consult what was best
to be done.

The wise *Bias*, chief Servant to that
great Mistress of her self, advised her to
imitate *Jupiter*, whose Thunderbolts
would have already been all spent, if he
had not had patience. *Louis XI.* King
of *France*, was of the Opinion that she
should dissemble as he had done, who ne-
ver taught his Son any other Grammar,
nor other Politicks. *Don John II.* King
of *Aragon*, represented to her, that till
then the Spanish delaying had wrought
more than the French haste. The great
Augustus recommended above all things,
and

and instead of all, his *Festina Lenté*. The Catholick King *Don Ferdinand*, as a Prince of Politicks, wherein *expectation* is well versed, spake more largely. One must, said he, be master of ones self, and then he'll quickly be of others. Temporizing seasons resolutions, and ripens secrets: whereas precipitation always begets untimely births that never attain to the life of immortality. (One must think leisurely, and execute speedily.) All diligence that is not directed by staidness runs great risk. Things escape from it; as easily as they fall in its way: and sometimes the resounding of the fall is the first signal of their being laid hold on. *Expectation* is the fruit of great hearts; and abounds in good successes. Men of little courage can neither keep time nor secrets. And then he concludes with that Catalan Oracle: *God makes not use of the rod but of the season.*

MAXIME LVI.

(To find out good expedients.)

Is the effect of a happy quickness which is no more puzzled at any thing; than as if nothing happened fortuitously: Some after long plodding, are still mista-

52 *The Courtiers Manual Oracle, or,*
ken in every thing; and others hit upon
expedients for all things, without think-
ing on them before. There are characters
of *Antiperistasis*, that never succeed bet-
ter than in a plunge. These are Prodi-
gies that doe every thing well upon the
spot, and all things ill which they have
premeditated. What they hit not upon
at first, they never hit upon. Such peo-
ple have great Reputation, because by the
quickness of their thoughts, and the suc-
cess of their enterprises, men judge their
capacity to be Prodigious.

Promptitude, saith the Authour, in his
Discreet, Chap. *Tener buevos repentés*, is
the Mother of good Fortune. Unpreme-
ditated hits proceed always from a high-
flown mind. *And some lines after.* If
esteem be due to all that is pertinently
done or said, a pat expedient found out
at the nick, deserves applause. Readiness
and success give a double value to things.
Some think much, and nevertheless still
fail; and others succeed in all things,
without thinking on them before. The
quickness of wit supplies the defect of a
deep judgment. What offers at first an-
ticipates consultation. There is nothing
casual for such men, inasmuch as the pre-
sence of mind stands them in stead of
forecast. *Extemporaries* are the gentile
seats

feats of a good discerning, and the loadstone of admiration. Ordinary actions unpremeditated, make a greater shew than high designs that have been concerted. *And a page after.* One single extemporary hit was enough to procure *Solomon* the renown of being the wisest of men. By one word he rendred himself more redoubtable, than by all his power. *Alexander* and *Cæsar* deserved to be the elder Sons of Fame, the one by bethinking himself to cut the Gordian Knot; and the other by saying when he fell, *It is a good sign that Africa is under me.* Two *Extemporaries* were as good to both, as the Conquest of two parts of the world. That essay gave a specimen, if they were capable of ruling the Universe.

If a sudden repartee hath always been plausible, a prompt resolution deserves well to be applauded. A happy promptitude in the effects, shews an eminent activity in the cause. Promptitude in conceiving, is a sign of subtilty, and a readiness in finding out good expedients, is a proof of Wisdom so much the more to be esteemed, that there is a great distance betwixt vivacity and prudence, and betwixt wit and judgment.

It is a perfection no less necessary than sublime in Generals of Armies, and brave

54 *The Courtiers Manual Oracle, or,*
men, inasmuch as their actions and executions are for most part all sudden and transitory, by reason of the many fortuitous cases that have neither been foreseen, nor consulted; and so must be ordered according as occasion offers: wherein consists the triumph of their presence of mind, and by consequent the whole assurance of their Victories.

But it becomes Kings better to think, because all their actions are eternal. They are to consider for many, and consequently have need of much Auxiliary Prudence, that they may secure the publick repose. They have time, and their Beds, where they let their resolutions ripen. They spend whole nights in thinking, that they may spend the days in safety. In a word, they labour more with the head than with the hands.

And in the third Chapter of a Heroe.
He thus speaks.

The sayings of *Alexander* are the *Flamboes* of his deeds. *Cæsar* was equally prompt in thinking and in acting. The promptitude of the mind is as happy as that of the will is dangerous. It furnishes wings for soaring to the height of grandeur. With these wings many have raised themselves from the centre of obscurity to the orb of the Sun.

If subtilty reign not, it deserves, at least to accompany those who reign. The ordinary sayings of a King are Crowned points of Wit. The treasures of Princes often fail; but their witty sayings are everlastingly preserved in the repository of Fame. Brave men have gone farther sometimes with one word, than with the force of their Arms, Victory being the ordinary reward of a shot of wit. The King of Sages, and the wisest of Kings, acquired that reputation by the ready expedient, which he found out in the greatest of all differences, which was to plead for an Infant. And this shews that wit is usefull to give credit to Justice.

MAXIME LVII.

The surest men are men of Reflexion.

What is well, comes always in good time. What is incontinently done, is as soon undone. That which is to last to eternity, ought to be an eternity a making. Perfection is the onely thing that is minded, and nothing lasts but what is perfect. All that proceeds from a profound Understanding, endures for ever. What is worth much costs much. The most pretious Metal is the latest in
E 4 coming

56 *The Courtiers Manual Oracle, or,*
coming to perfection, and the heaviest.

Soon enough, if well enough, said a Wise Man. We examine not how long one has been a doing of a work, but if it be well done. That onely makes it valuable. *Fast* and *slow*, are accidents which are unknown or forgotten: whereas *Well* is permanent. What is done in a trice, will be undone all of a sudden. It soon ends, because it was soon finished. The more the Children of *Saturn* come before the time, the faster he devours them. That which is to last for eternity, ought to be an eternity in coming. *Gratian* in his *Discreet*, Chap. *Tener buenvos repentés*.

Apelles said to a Painter, who bragg'd that he spent but little time in making his Pictures: *That is easily believed, because it is seen*. The famous *Michael Angelo*, who was very long about his Works, said, that in arts haste was good for nothing, and that as Nature takes much time in forming Animals, that are to last long; so Art that strives to imitate Nature, ought to work leisurely, it being impossible for man to doe any thing that is excellent in haste.

MAX.

MAXIME LVIII.

(To shape ones self according to people.

One must not strive to shew his parts alike with all people, nor employ greater force than the occasion requires. There must be no profusion neither of knowledge nor power. The skilfull Fowler throws no more meat to the Birds than what is necessary to catch them. Have a special care not to make ostentation of every thing, for you'll soon come to want admirers. Some new thing is to be kept in store, that we may appear with to morrow : every day a fresh proof, is the way still to keep in credit, and to be the more admired, that so one never shews the bounds of his capacity.)

MAXIME LIX.

(The man that makes himself to be desired and regretted.)

If a man enter the house of Fortune by the gate of pleasure, he comes out commonly by the door of vexation. It is greater art to get out happily, than to enter it with popular applause. It is the ordinary

ordinary lot of fortunate people to have most favourable beginnings, and then a tragical end. Felicity consists not in having the applause of the people at ones entry : for that is an advantage which all that enter have. The difficult matter is to have the same applause at ones *exit*. You see but very few who are regrated. It seldom happens that they who go out, are accompanied with good fortune. For it is her pleasure to be as surly to those that go, as she is civil and caressing to those who come.

The same applause, says he in his *Discreet*, Chap. *Hombre de buen dexo*, that one hath had in the beginning, makes the murmuring the greater at the end. The fronts of Offices are all magnificent, but never the back parts, entries into Dignities are Crowned like Victories, but the goings off are attended with curses.

What strange applauses to an Authority that begins, whether because of the pleasure that people take in changes, or of the hopes that every one hath to obtain particular favours ! but when it expires, alas, what silence ! nay, and silence would stand in stead of a favourable acclamation too.

Prudence applies it self wholly to end things

things well. It is far more attentive how to come out, than in listening to the applauses of an entry. A vigilant *Palinurus* governed not his Vessel by the head, but by the stern. There he keeps himself, that he may conduct her through the voyage of this life; all the disgrace, (and as he says in the beginning of that Chapter) all the race of misfortune remains for the end, as all the bitterness is at the ground of the potion. The precept of that Roman for beginning and ending was excellent, who said that he had obtained all Dignities before he desired them, and had left them all, before they were desired by others. Misfortune is sometimes the punishment of immoderation. It is the comfort of the Wise, that they have retired before Fortune withdrew. Heaven it self hath employed that remedy in favours of some Heroes. *Moses* disappeared, and *Elias* was taken up, that so they might end in triumph.

MAXIME LX.

Good sense.

Some are born Prudent, by a natural inclination they enter into the way of wisdom, and they are got almost half way
at

at first. Their reason ripens with age and experience, and at length they attain to the highest degree of judgment. They startle at capriciousness, as a temptation of their prudence, but especially in matters of State; which by reason of their extreme importance, require the strictest circumspection. Such men deserve to sit at the helm of Government, or at least to be Counsellors to those who hold it.

MAXIME LXI.

To excell in the excellent

Is a thing very singular in the plurality of perfections. There can be no Heroe without some extreme sublimity. Mediocrity is not an object big enough for applause. Eminence in a high employment distinguishes from the vulgar, and raises one to the category of rare men. To be eminent in a low profession, is to be great in little, and something in nothing. What is most delectable is least sublime. Eminence in high matters is as a character of Sovereignty, which excites admiration, and conciliates good will.

MAX-

MAXIME LXII.

(To make use of good Instruments.)

Some make the quaintness of their wit to consist in employing bad instruments. A dangerous point of honour, and worthy of an unhappy issue. The excellence of the Minister hath never lessened the glory of the Master : on the contrary, all the honour of the success rebounds upon the principal cause ; and in like manner all the blame. Fame sounds always the praises of the first Authours. It never says : *That Man hath had good or bad Servants* ; but, *That he hath been a good or bad Workman*. One must therefore endeavour to chuse his Ministers well, since on them depends the immortality of Reputation.

MAXIME LXIII.

The excellence of Primacy.

If Primacy be backed by Eminence, it is on a double account excellent. It is a great advantage to have the hand at play, for that gives the better on't, if the Cards be equal. Several had been the Phoenix
of

62 *The Courtiers Mannal Oracle, or,*
of their Profession, if others had not gone
before them. The first have the birth-
right in the inheritance of reputation,
and there remains but a scanty portion
of the Juniors, nay and that too conte-
sted. It's to no purpose for those to fret,
they cannot baffle the opinion which the
world hath, that they doe no more but
imitate. Great spirits have always affec-
ted a new way for attaining to excellenc:
yet so, that Prudence hath always been
employed for their guide. The Wise by
the novelty of their enterprises get them-
selves to be listed in the Catalogue of He-
roes. Some had rather be the Captains of
the second form, than the seconds of the
first.

MAXIME LXIV.

To vex as little as may be.

Is a most usefull Science. It's as the
Midwife to all the happiness of life. It
is good for nothing either to give or re-
ceive bad tidings. We are onely to give
entry to those that asswage trouble. There
are some who employ their Ear onely in
hearing flatteries; others please them-
selves to listen to false reports; and some
cannot live so much as one day without
some

some vexation, no more than *Mithridates* could without poison. Nay, it is a far greater absurdity for one to be willing to disturb himself as long as he lives, that he may once give satisfaction to another, how closely soever he may be linked to him. We must never offend against our selves, to comply with him, who advises, and keeps off at a distance. It is therefore a rational and usefull lesson, that as often as it is put to thy option to please another or displease thy self, thou'lt doe better to let another be discontented, than to become so thy self, and that without remedy.

MAXIME LXV.

The quaint and critical Judgment.

The judgment is cultivated as well as the wit. The excellence of understanding refines the desire, and then the pleasure of enjoyment. The extent of the capacity is measured by the niceness of the judgment. A great capacity stands in need of a great object to give it content, as a large stomach requires proportionable food, so high minds demand elevated matters. The noblest objects are afraid of a delicate judgment, perfections

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tions that are generally esteemed, dare not hope to please it. Seeing there is but very little without defect, one ought to be very sparing of esteem. Judgments are formed in conversation, and we make another man's judgment our own by frequenting his company. It is then a great happiness to have commerce with persons of an excellent judgment. Yet we must not make profession of esteeming nothing at all. For that is an extreme folly, and an affectation more odious than a depraved palate. Some would have God to make another world, and other beauties to satisfy their extravagant and whimsical fancies.

MAXIME LXVI.

To take good measures before one undertakes.

Some eye the project more than the event : and nevertheless direction is not a sufficient surety to save one from the dishonour that attends an unfortunate issue. The Conquerour has no account to give. There are but a few who are capable to examine the reasons and circumstances, but every one judges by the event. And therefore a successful man
never

never loses his reputation. (A happy end crowns all, though wrong means may have been used for attaining to it.) For it is art to go contrary to art, when otherwise one cannot compass what he intends.

MAXIME LXVII.

To prefer plausible Employments.

Most things depend upon the satisfaction of others. Esteem is to perfections, what the Zephyres are to flowers; that is to say, nourishment and life. There are some employments generally applauded, and others, which though they be high, yet are not courted. The former gain the good will of all, because they are managed in sight of all people. The other are more majestic, and as such, attract more veneration: but because they are undiscernable, they are the less applauded to. Amongst Princes, the victorious are the more celebrated: and hence it is that the Kings of *Aragon* have been so famous, by their titles of Warriors, Conquerours, Magnanimous. Let a man of merit, if he would eternise his memory by general applause, chuse then such employments, wherein every one hath some knowledge, and all have a share.

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Some,

Some, says the Authour in the eighth Chapter of his *Heroe*, prefer difficult employments before others that are more plausible, the admiration of some choice men being more charming to them, than the applause of a great many in the crowd. They call plausible enterprizes the miracles of the ignorant. The truth is, few men know the difficulty and excellence of a great undertaking ; but seeing these are sublime spirits, for all they are so few, they fail not to put them in vogue. What is plausible is easily known, it familiarizes it self to the senses ; but then the applause it receives, is so much the more vulgar, that it is universal. The daintiness of the small number carries it over the multitude of the vulgar. Nevertheless, it is the character of a fine wit, to bribe common attention by the charm of plausibility : since eminence dazzling the Eyes of all, settles Reputation by common consent. We must esteem what most esteem. The excellence of plausible actions is conspicuous : whereas those which are above the ordinary reach, are never so evident, but that they are still very metaphysical, being no ways illustrious but by the Idea's that men conceive of them. I call that plausible which is acted in view, and to the satisfaction of all people, and hath
always

always reputation for a basis. Whereby I exclude some employments that are as void of credit, as they are full of ostentation. A Comedian is rich in applauses, but poor in esteem. In the functions of the mind the plausible hath ever had the honour. A polite and smooth running discourse tickles the ears, and charms the understanding: on the contrary, a dry, bombast, metaphysical expression offends or cloyes the hearers. And in his *Discreet*, Chap. *Hombre de buena election*: There are, saith he, employments, the chief exercise whereof consists in chusing, and which depend more upon others, than upon the practiser: as are all such whose end is to teach and please. Let the Orator then prefer plausible arguments. The Historian mingle the pleasant with the usefull: and the Philosopher the specious with the sententious. Let them all study to fit the universal relish of others; which is the true method of chusing. For it is the same as in a Feast, where the Dishes are not drest for the palate of the Cooks, but of the Guests. What signifies it, that the matters exceedingly please the Orator, if they be not relished by the hearers, for whom they are prepared?

—*Nam cœnæ fercula nostræ,
Malim convivis, quam placuisse cocis.*

Saith *Martial.*

MAXIME LXVIII.

*To inform, is far better than to put in
mind.*

Sometimes we are to rememorate, sometimes advise. There are many who fail to doe things which would be excellent, because they thought not of them. Then it is that a good advice is in season, to make them conceive what is important to be done. It is one of the greatest Talents of a man to have a present mind to think on what he hath to doe, for want whereof many affairs miscarry. He then that comprehends, is to carry the light; and he that needs to be lighted, ought to make application to the other. The first ought to be sparing, and the other diligent. It's enough for the former to clear the way for the latter. This is a very important maxime, and profitable for him that instructs: and in case his first lesson be not sufficient, he ought with pleasure to proceed. Having once conquered the *Nay*,
he

he must dextrously catch hold of a *Tea*. For it often happens, that nothing is obtained, because nothing attempted.

MAXIME LXIX.

Not to be of the humour of the vulgar.

He is a great man that gives no admission to popular impressions. (It is a lesson of Prudence to reflect upon ones self, to know ones own inclination, to prevent it, and even to goe to the other extremity, that one may find the poise of reason betwixt nature and art. The knowledge of ones self is the beginning of amendment.) There are some Monsters of impertinence, who are now of one humour, and by and by of another ; and change their opinions as their humours. They engage in quite contrary affairs, being always hurried away by the impetuosity of that civil torrent, which not onely corrupts the will, but also the knowledge and judgment.

A great Capacity (saith the Authour in the Chapter, *No rendirse al humor* of his *Discreet*) is never carried with the flux and reflux neither of humours, nor of passions. It is always above that clownish immoderation. Many shame-

70 *The Courtiers Manual Oracle, or,*
fully suffer themselves to be tyrannized
over by the predominant humour. They
maintain to day what they contradicted
yesterday. Sometime they stand for rea-
son, and sometimes they trample it under
foot. There is no rest for their judge-
ments, which is the height of extrava-
gance. You cannot take them in a good
sense, because they have none. Yesterday
and to day they differ as much as black
and white: and then having been the first
to contradict themselves, they contradict
all others. When once we understand their
depraved mind, it is best to let them a-
lone in their own confusion. For the
more they doe, the more they undoe.

It is the sign of a rich stock of sense,
to know how to prevent and correct
ones humour, since it is a disease of mind,
wherein a wise man ought to govern
himself as in a distemper of body.

There are such far gone impertinents,
that they are always in some humour;
always galled with some passion; insup-
portable to those who have to doe with
them, perpetual Enemies of conversation
and civility, who have no relish of the
best things; more incurable than stark
fools. For with a little compliance these
are wheedled, and those grow worse by
it. There is nothing to be got of them
by

by reason, for having none themselves, they'll receive none from others.

But if a man sometimes fall into a passion, and that but rarely, and for a great cause, that will be no ground to accuse him of a vulgar humour. For never to be angry, is to be always a Beast. But a constant bad humour, and towards all people, is insupportable Clownishness. Anger, which makes the slave, may still be a sauce for a free state. But he that is not capable of knowing himself, will be still less of correcting himself.

MAXIME LXX.

(To know how to refuse.

All is not to be granted, nor to all. To know how to refuse, is as important as to know how to bestow ; and it is a very necessary qualification in those who command. All consists in the manner. A *Nay* of some is better received than a *Tea* of others, because a *Nay* seasoned with civility, gives greater content than a *Tea* with bad grace. There are some who have always a *Nay* in their mouth. *No*, is always their first answer, and though they chance afterwards to grant all that's desired, they have no thanks for it, because

72 *The Courtiers Manual Oracle, or,*
of the unfavoury *No* that went before.
We must not refuse point blank, but
make our denial be taken down by little
sips, if I may say so. Nor must we re-
fuse all things neither, lest we put peo-
ple into despair: but on the contrary,
leave always a remnant of hope to sweet-
ten the bitterness of the denial. Let
Courtesie fill up the vacuity of favour,
and good words supply the defect of good
deeds.) *Yea* and *No* are soon said, but
before we say them, we should think on
them long first.

MAXIME LXXI.

*Not to be unequal, and irregular in ones
proceeding.*

A prudent man never falls into that
fault neither through humour nor affecta-
tion. He is still the same in relation to
that which is perfect; which is the mark
of a sound judgment. If sometimes he
change, it is because the countenance of
occasions and affairs is changed. All ine-
quality mis-becomes Prudence. There
are some who dayly differ from them-
selves. Their understanding is even jour-
nal, and much more their will and con-
duct. What was yesterday their pleasant
Yea,

Yea, is to day their unpleasant *No*. They always falsifie their proceeding, and the opinion that men have of them, because they are never themselves.

MAXIME LXXII.

The man of resolution.

Irresolution is worse than bad execution. Waters corrupt not so long as they run, but when they are standing. There are some men so irresolute, that they never doe any thing but when they are pusht on to it by others : and that sometimes proceeds not so much from the puzle of their judgment, which is often quick and subtile, as from a natural laziness. It is a sign of a great mind to raise to it self difficulties, but of a greater to know how to clear them. There are also men who are puzled at nothing, and these are born for great employments, inasmuch as the quickness of their conception, and steadiness of their judgment, facilitate to them the understanding and dispatch of affairs. Whatever falls into their hands is as good as done. One of that character having given the Law to one whole world, had time enough over and above to think of another.

Such

74 *The Courtiers Manual Oracle, or,*
Such men undertake with assurance, unde-
der the protection of their good fortune,

MAXIME LXXIII.

(To find out Evasions

Is the knack of men of wit. With a touch of gallantry they extricate themselves out of the greatest labyrinth. A gracefull smile will make them avoid the most dangerous quarrel. [The greatest of Captains founded all his Reputation upon that.] A word of a double meaning agreeably palliates a negative. There is nothing better, than never to be too well understood.)

MAXIME LXXIII.

Not to be inaccessible.

The true wild Beasts are where most people are. A difficult access is the vice of those whose manners honour hath changed. To begin by rejecting of others, is not the way to get credit. How pleasant is it to see one of those untractable monsters strut it in the garb of haughtiness! They, who are so unhappy as to have business with them, goe to their
Audience,

Audience, as if they were going to fight with Tigers, that's to say, armed as much with fear as circumspection. To mount up to that post they cringed to all people; but so soon as they are in it, it seems they would take their revenge by huffing every body. Their employment requires that they should be free to all men: but their pride and surly humour makes them accessible to no man. So that the true way to be revenged on them, is to let them alone by themselves, to the end, that wanting all conversation, they may never become wise.

MAXIME LXXV.

To propose to ones self some Heroe, not so much to be imitated, as to be surpassed.

There are models of grandeur, and living books of reputation. Let every one propose to themselves those who have excelled in their Profession, not so much to follow as to outstrip them. *Alexander* wept, not that he saw *Achilles* in the Tomb, but to see himself so little known in the world, in comparison of *Achilles*. Nothing inspires more Ambition than the fame of another's Reputation. That which stifles envy, gives breath to courage.

MAX-

MAXIME LXXVI.

Not to be always in the jocular humour.

Prudence appears in seriousness; and the serious are more esteemed than the jocular. He that drolls always, is never a thorough-pac'd man. We use these men, as we do liars, not believing what one nor the other says, jeasting being no less suspected than lying. It is never known when they speak with judgment, which is the same as if they had none at all. There is nothing more unpleasant than a continual pleasantness. By endeavouring to purchase the Reputation of being pleasant, one loses the advantage of being thought wise. Some minutes are to be allowed to mirth, and the rest to seriousness.

MAXIME LXXVII.

To be company for all sorts of men.

He is a wise *Proteus* that is holy with the holy, learned with the learned, serious with the serious, and jovial with the merry. That is the way to gain all hearts, similitude being the bond of good will.

will. To discern tempers, and by a politick transformation to suit the humour and character of every one, is a secret absolutely necessary for those who depend on others. But that requires a great stock. A man who is universal in knowledge and experience, has less trouble in doing it.)

MAXIME LXXVIII.

The art of undertaking to purpose.

Folly enters always at random : for all fools are bold. The same ignorance which hinders them at first from considering what is necessary, hides from them afterwards the knowledge of the faults which they commit. But Wisdom enters with great circumspection. Her Fore-runners are reflexion and discretion, that scour the roade for her, that so she may advance without any danger. Discretion condemns all kinds of temerity to a precipice, though good fortune sometime justify them. One ought to go step by step where he suspects there is any depth. It is the part of judgment to try, and of Prudence to pursue. There are at present great shelves in the commerce of the world. We
ought

78 *The Courtiers Manual Oracle, or,*
ought therefore to have a care of our
foundings.

MAXIME LXXIX.

The jovial humour

Is rather an accomplishment than a defect, when there is no excess in it. A grain of mirth seasons all. The greatest men, as well as others play their frolicks, for conciliating the good will of every body : but with this difference that they always retain the preference for wisdom, and respect to decency. Others come off when they are gone too far by a spell of good humour. For some things are to be taken laughing, and the very same sometimes that others take in good earnest. Such a humour is the loadstone of hearts.

MAXIME LXXX.

To be carefull to be informed.

The life of man is almost wholly spent in taking information. What we see is the least essential. We live upon the credit of others. The ear is the second door to truth, and the first to lies. Commonly truth is seen, but it is extraordinary

ordinary to hear it. It seldom comes pure to our ears, especially when it comes from a far. For then it takes some tincture of the passions that it meets by the way. It pleases or displeases, according to the colours that passion or interest give it, which aim always at prepossessing. Have a care of him that praises; but much more of him that blames. There it is that one hath need of a sharp sight, to discover the intention of him that makes his pass, and to know before-hand where he has a mind to hit. Make use of reflexion in discerning the slight or counterfeit from the good stuff.

MAXIME LXXXI.

To revive ones Reputation from time to time

Is the privilege of the Phoenix. Excellence is subject to grow old, and with it in like manner fame. Custome lessens admiration. An ordinary novelty commonly carries it from the highest excellence, that begins to grow old. One had need then to revive in valour, wit, fortune, in all things, and to shew always new beauties, as the Sun doth, which so often changes Horizons and Theatres,
that

80 *The Courtiers Manual Oracle, or,*
that so privation may make him desirable
when he sets; and novelty admirable,
when he rises.

MAXIME LXXXII.

Not to pry too much neither into good nor evil.

A wise man comprehended all his wisdom in this Precept, *ne quid nimis*, nothing too much. Too strict a justice degenerates into injustice. The Orange that is too much squeezed, yields a bitter juice. Nay in enjoyment, we ought never to go to either of the two extremes. Wit it self is exhausted by too much straining. By endeavouring to draw down too much milk, bloud is often fetched.

MAXIME LXXXIII.

To commit some small faults on design.

A little negligence sometimes sets off good qualities. Envy hath its *Ostracism*, and that *Ostracism* is the more in fashion. That it is unjust. It accuses that which is perfect of the fault of being without a fault: and the perfecter the thing is, the more it condemns it. It is an *Argus* in discovering faults in that which is most excel-

excellent, and perhaps out of spight of coming short of it. Censure is like the Thunderbolt that commonly falls upon the highest Mountains. It is convenient then to sleep sometimes, as the good *Homer* did, and to affect certain failings whether in wit or courage, (but without annoying reason) to appease ill will, and to hinder the imposture of bad humour from breaking. That is the throwing of ones cloak before the Eyes of Envy, to save reputation for ever after.

MAXIME LXXXIV.

To know how to draw advantage from Enemies.

All things are to be taken, not by the blade, which may hurt; but by the handle, which is the way for defence. And upon better reason envy. The wise man draws more advantage from his Enemies, than the fool does from his Friends. The envious are as a spur to the wise man to make him surmount a thousand difficulties: whereas flatterers many times divert him. Many owe their fortune to their enviers. Flattery is more cruel than hatred, in as much as it palliates the faults, which the other makes us remedy. The

wise man makes the hatred of his Enviars his looking-glass, wherein he sees himself far better than in that of kindness. That looking-glass shews him the faults which he corrects, and thereby prevents back-biting. For men keep upon their close guard, when they have rivals, or Enemies for Neighbours.

MAXIME LXXXV.

Not to be lavish of ones self.

It is the misfortune of all that is excellent to degenerate into abuse ; when it is too much made use of. What all men passionately covet, comes at length to displease all men. It's a great unhappiness to be good at nothing ; as also to desire to be good at every thing. These always lose, through a desire of gaining too much ; and at long run they are as much hated, as they were favoured before. All perfections are obnoxious to this lot : so soon as they lose the reputation of being rare, they get that of being common. The onely remedy for every thing that excels, is to be moderate in shew. The excess ought to be in the perfection, and the mean in the manner of shewing it. The more light a Torch gives, the shorter

ter while it lasts. What is cut off from appearance and ostentation, is fully made up in esteem.

MAXIME LXXXVI.

To arm against Calumny.

The vulgar hath many Heads and Tongues, and by consequent more eyes also. Let a bad rumour slip amongst these Tongues, that alone is enough to blemish the highest Reputation: and if that rumour turn into a nick-name, farewell all the esteem that a man hath acquired. These scoffs hit commonly upon certain obvious defects, which, if they be singular, furnish ample matter of derision. And as there are imperfections which private envy exposes to the eyes of publick malice: there are also sharp edged Tongues, which with a word blurted in the air, destroy more suddenly a great Reputation, than others do with all their impudence. It is very easie to have an ill name, because evil is soon believed, and sinistrous impressions are very difficult to be obliterated. A wise man therefore ought to be upon his Guard. For it is easier to prevent Calumny, than to remedy it.

MAXIME LXXXVII.

To cultivate and embellish.

(Man is born barbarous. He is ransomed from the condition of Beasts, onely by being cultivated.) The more he is cultivated, the more he becomes man. In respect of Education, *Greece* had reason to call all the rest of the world barbarous. There is nothing so rude as ignorance; nor nothing that polishes more than knowledge. But (knowledge it self is rude, if it be without art. It is not enough that the understanding is cleared, the will must also be regulated, and the manner of conversing more.) There are some men naturally polished, whether as to conceiving, or speaking; as to the advantages of the body, which are but as the bark; or of the mind, which are the fruit. There are others again so clownish, that all their actions, and sometimes even the rich Talents which they have, are disfigured by the ruggedness of their humour.

MAX-

MAXIME LXXXIII.

To study to have a gentile Carriage in Actions.

A great man ought never to be punctilious in his proceedings. One must never nibble too much at things, especially at those which are not agreeable. For though it be usefull to observe every thing by the bye, yet it is not so to dive into them purposely. We ought commonly to carry with a gentile indifference, which makes a part of Gallantry. (To dissemble is the chief means to govern.) It is good to pass by a great many things that occur in the commerce of life, but particularly amongst Enemies. The *too much* is always irksome, and in humour it is unsupportable. It is a kind of madness to hunt after vexations. And ordinarily such is the way of carriage, as the humour is in which one acts. (Our actions take the character of the humour we are in when we doe them.)

MAXIME LXXXIX.

*Exactly to know ones Genius, Mind, Heart
and Passions.*

One cannot be master of himself, unless he know himself to the bottom. There are looking-glasses for the face, but none for the mind. That then must be supplied by a serious reflexion upon ones self. When the external image is gone, let the internal retain and correct it. Measure thy strength and skill before thou undertake any thing. Know thy activity that thou mayst engage, fathom thy depth, and examine how far thy capacity may reach in all things.

MAXIME XC.

The way to live long

Is to live well. There are two things which shorten the life, folly and wickedness. Some have lost it, because they knew not how to keep it ; others because they would not. As vertue is its own reward, so is vice its own executioner. Whoever lives fast in vice, dies soon, and that two ways : whereas they who live fast

fast in vertue never die. The integrity of mind is communicated to the body : and a good life is always long, not onely in the *intension*, but in the *extension* also.

MAXIME XCI.

To act without fear of failing.

The fear of not succeeding, discovers the weakness of him that acts to his Rival.) If, even in the heat of passion, the mind is in suspense, so soon as that first flash is over, he will upbraid himself with his own imprudence. All actions that are done with doubting are dangerous, it were better to let them alone. Prudence is not satisfied with probabilities, it goes always on sure grounds. How can that enterprize succeed which fear damns, so soon as the mind hath conceived it ? And if a resolution that hath been unanimously taken in the council of Reason, hath often a bad issue, what is to be expected from that which hath wavered from the beginning in reason and prognostication.

MAXIME XCII.

A transcendent Wit in all things

Is the principal rule, whether for acting or speaking. The more sublime employments are, the more that Wit is necessary. A grain of Prudence is worth more than a barn full of subtilty. It is a way that leads to infallibility; although it touches not so much upon plausibility. Though the fame of Wisedom be the triumph of Renown, yet it will suffice to content the wise, whose approbation is the touch-stone of enterprizes.

MAXIME XCIII.

The universal Man.

The man who possesses all sorts of perfections, is alone worth a great many others. He renders life happy by communicating to others. Variety joined to perfection is the recreation of life. It is great skill to know how to furnish ones self with all that is good. And since nature hath in man, as in the most excellent of her works, made an abridgment of the whole Universe, Art ought also to make

make of the mind of man an universe of knowledge and vertue.

MAXIME XCIV.

(An inexhaustible Capacity.

Let a man of parts have a special care that no man sound the depth of his knowledge and skill, if he would be revered by all. Let him suffer himself to be known, but not to be comprehended. Let no man have that advantage over him as to find out the bounds of his capacity, lest he may come to be undeceived. Let him husband himself so well, that no body may see him entirely. Opinion and doubting procures more veneration to him of whose wit and parts the reach is not known, than when he is fully known to be what he is, let him be never so accomplished and great.)

The Authour Comments excellently upon this Aphorism in the first Chapter of his Heroe.

As no man, says he, dares to cross a River on foot, untill he hath found out the foard, even so a man is revered so long as one sees not the bottom of his capacity, inasmuch as an unknown depth, and by consequent presumed to be great,
is

90 *The Courtiers Manual Oracle, or,*
is respected out of fear. If he, who discovers, becomes the master of him that is discovered, as the Proverb saith: he that stands upon his guard is never surprized. Let the address of a witty man way-lay the curiosity of him that attempts to find it out. For it is in the beginnings of an essay that curiosity employs all its cunning. If one cannot be infinite, he ought at least endeavour to appear so. The wise man of *Mitilene* had reason to say, that the half was more than the whole, seeing one half in shew, and the other in reserve, is better than a whole made manifest. Thou then who aspirest to greatness, and art a candidate of Renown observe well this Precept. Let all men know thee, but no man know thee thoroughly. By that industry thy little will appear great; thy great more, and thy more infinite.

MAXIME XCV.

To know how to entertain another's expectation.

The way to feed it is always to give it fresh nourishment. Much ought to promise more; a great action ought to serve for a spur to others greater. All
must

must not be shewn at first time. It's a piece of skill to know how to measure ones strength according to necessity and time, and dayly to discharge what is dayly expected by the publick.

MAXIME XCVI.

Conscience.

Is the Throne of Reason, and the basis of Prudence. When that is consulted, it is easie not to miscarry. It is a gift of Heaven, and being so important as it is, cannot be too much desired. It is the chief piece of the Armour of Man, and is so necessary to him, that it would be sufficient, though all the rest were wanting. All the actions of life depend upon its influence, and are esteemed good or bad, according as it judges of them, since every thing ought to be done with reason. It consists in a natural inclination, which tends to equity, and takes always the surer side.

MAXIME XCVII.

To acquire and preserve Reputation,

Is to have and to hold Fame. Repu-
tation

92 *The Courtiers Manual Oracle, or,*
tation costs much in the purchase, because
it requires for that end eminent qualities,
which are as rare as the indifferent are
common. Being once purchased, it is easie to
preserve it. It animates much, and acts still
more. It is a kind of majesty, when it com-
mands veneration, by virtue of the subli-
mity of its cause and sphere. But that Re-
putation is the most substantial, which
always hath been well supported,

MAXIME XCVIII.

To dissemble.

Passions are the breaches of the mind.
The most usefull knowledge is the art to
dissemble. He that shews his Game,
runs the risque of losing it. Let circum-
spection combat against Curiosity. Cover
thine heart with a hedge of diffidence and
reserve, from those who nibble too nicely
at words. Let them never know thy
disposition, lest they prevent thee either
by contradiction or flattery.

He who yields to his passions, saith
the Authour, *Chap. 2.* of his Heroe,
stoops from the state of a Man, to the
condition of a Beast; whereas he that
disguises them, preserves his Credit, at
least in appearance. Our passions are the
swoon-

swoonings of our Reputation. He that can make a sacrifice of his will, is Lord over himself. (To dive into the will of another, is a mark of a sublime wit: to be able to hide ones own, is to get the superiority over another. To discover ones thought, is to open the gate of the fort of the mind. Here it is that politricks Enemies give the assault, and most frequently with success too. When once the passions are known, all the avenues and Sally-ports of the will are known, and by consequent it may be commanded upon any occasion.) A complete man must then in the first place apply himself to the subduing of his passions, and then to the dissembling of them so artfully, that no spie can ever be able to unmask his thought. This Maxime teaches one to become an able man, when he is not; and so cunningly to hide all his imperfections, that all the sharp-sighted spies of another man's road, lose their way in seeking it. That Catholick *Amazon* of *Spain*, (*he speaks of Queen Isabelle, Wife to Ferdinand*) may serve as a pattern in that art. When she was to be brought to bed, she shut her self up in the darkest and most secret place of her Palace; that by a veil of darkness she might cover the sower faces and distorted looks that might
be

94 *The Courtiers Manual Oracle, or;*
be forced from her in the agony of her labour, and hinder the shrieks and complainings that might escape her in the extremity of pain, from coming to peoples ears. If she observed so great measures of decency and majesty on such occasions wherein every thing is excusable, how carefull must she have been in those where her Reputation was to be maintained?

MAXIME XCIX.

Reality and appearance.

Things are not taken for what they are, but for what they appear to be. There is scarcely any one that sees into the inside, most part of men content themselves with shews. It is not enough to have a good intention, if the action look ill.

MAXIME C.

*The Man undeceived. The Christian Sage.
The Courtly Philosopher.*

It is fit to be so, but not to appear to be so, and far less to affect to be thought so. Though to Philosophize be the most worthy exercise of the wise, yet it is now
a-days

a-days out of fashion. The learning of able men is despised. *Seneca* having introduced it into *Rome*, it was sometime in vogue at Court, and at present it passes there for folly. But Prudence and a good mind are not fed with prejudice.

MAXIME CI.

*One part of the World laughs at the other,
and both laugh at their common folly.*

Every thing is good or bad, according to the whimsey of People. That Fool is insupportable, who would have all things go according to his fancy. Perfections depend not upon one single approbation. There are as many Opinions as Faces, and as great difference amongst the one as the other. There is no fault without an adherent, and thou oughtest not to be discouraged, if what thou doest, pleases not some, seeing there will always be others who will value it. But be not proud of the approbation of these, since you will be still exposed to the censure of others. The rule whereby to know what deserves esteem, is the approbation of men of worth, and of such as are acknowledgedly capable of being good judges of the thing. The civil life moves not
upon

96 *The Courtiers Manual Oracle, or,*
upon one single opinion, nor upon one single custome.

MAXIME CII.

A Stomach that can well receive the large mouth-fulls of Fortune.

A great Stomach is not the least part of the body of Prudence. A large capacity hath need of great parts. Prosperities cumber not him who deserves greater. What cloyes some raises an appetite in others. There are many who receive prejudice from all juicy food, because they are of a weak Constitution, and are neither born, nor bred up for so high employments. The commerce of the world is bitter to their taste, and the steams of their vain-glory, which mount up to their brain, occasion dangerous giddinesses: high places make their heads to swim, they cannot hold themselves, because their fortune cannot hold within them. Let a man of Brains then shew, that he has still a place left to lodge a greater fortune in: and use all his industry to avoid every thing that may give the least sign of a low courage.

MAX-

MAXIME CIII.

Every one is to keep the grandeur that is proper for his state.

(Let all thy actions proportionably to thy condition, be the actions if not of a King, at least worthy of a King. That's to say, carry Royally, as much as thy fortune can allow. Let there be grandeur in thine actions, elevation in thy thoughts, to the end, that if thou be not a King in reality, thou mayst be one in merit.) For true Royalty consists in Virtue. He has no reason to envy the grandeur, who may be the model thereof. But it concerns those chiefly who are upon the Throne, or who approach near to it, to make some provision of true superiority, that's to say, of the qualities of majesty, rather than to please themselves with the Ceremonies, which vanity and luxury have introduced. They ought to prefer the solidity of substance before the emptiness of Ostentation.)

H

MAX-

MAXIME CIV.

To examine the nature of businesses.

Every employment hath its way, he must be an essay-master that can judge the difference of them. Some employments require valour, others quickness: some demand onely probity, and others again Artifice. The first are more easie, and the others more difficult to be discharged. For performing the first, good natural ability is sufficient, whereas for the others, all application and vigilance is too little. It is a very painfull office to have the government of men, but much more to have the conduct of Fools and Beasts. A double portion of sense is needfull for ordering of those that have none. That is an insupportable employment which requires a man's whole labour, is stinted to hours, and hath always the same thing to doe. Those are much better wherein variety concurs with importance, seeing change delights the mind. But the best of all are such, which are least dependant, or whose dependance is most remote: and that is the worst, which, when we come out of it, obliges us to render an account to rigorous Judges,

Judges, and especially when it is to God.

MAXIME CV.

Not to be tedious.

A man that hath but one business, or he that hath always the same thing to say, is commonly tedious. Brevity is fitter for negotiation. It gains by delighting what it loses by sparing. What is good, is doubly good, if it be short: and in like manner what is bad, is less so, if there be little of it.) Spirits operate better than mingled Potions. It is a known truth that a great talker is seldom a man of parts. There are some men that give more trouble than honour to the Universe. They are clouts thrown out into the Streets, which every one kicks out of his way. A discreet man ought to have special care not to be troublesome, especially to men of much business. For it were better to be uneasy to all the rest of the world, than to one of those. What is well said, is said in short.

H 2

MAX.

MAXIME CVI.

Not to be proud of ones Fortune.

Ostentation of Dignity offends more than ostentation of person. To carry high, is to become odious; it is enough to be envied. The more we hunt after Reputation, the less we find it. Seeing it depends on the judgment of others, no body can give it: and by consequent it must be merited and expected. Great employments require an authority suitable to their Functions, and without that, they cannot be worthily discharged. We ought to preserve all the authority that is necessary for acquitting our selves of the main of our obligations: not to make too much of it, but second it. All who pretend to be overcharged with business, shew themselves to be unworthy of their employments, as loaded with a burthen they are not able to bear. If any man would set himself off, let him doe it rather by a great personal worth, than by a borrowed character. Nay, a King ought to gain himself more veneration by his own worth, than by his Sovereignty, which is but an external thing.

MAX.

MAXIME CVII.

Not to appear pleased with ones self.

(To be dissatisfied with ones self, is weakness, and to be pleased, folly.) In most men that satisfaction proceeds from ignorance, and ends in a blind felicity, which, indeed, entertains pleasure, but preserves not the Reputation. As it is rare to judge well of the eminent qualities of others, so men applaud to themselves in those they have, how vulgar and ordinary soever they be. Diffidence hath always been usefull to the wise, whether for taking such good measures, that affairs did succeed; or for comforting themselves when they succeeded not. For he that hath foreseen the evil, is the less troubled at it, when it happens. Sometimes *Homer* himself is asleep, and *Alexander* descends from the Throne of his Majesty, and acknowledges his weakness. Affairs depend on many circumstances, and what hath succeeded at one time, hath been unfortunate at another. But it is the incorrigibility of fools, that they turn their vainest thoughts into flowers, and that their weeds are always sprouting.

MAXIME CVIII.

The shortest way to become a great man, is to be able to chuse his company.

Conversation is of great weight. Manners, humours, opinions, nay, and wit, are insensibly communicated. So a hasty man should frequent the company of one that is patient, and every one his contrary. By this means they will without any labour attain to a fit temper. It is no small matter to be able to moderate ones self. The alternate variety of seasons causes the beauty and duration of the Universe. As contrariety makes the harmony of natural things, so the harmony of civil society becomes more lovely by the difference of manners. Prudence ought to make use of this policy in the choice of Friends and Servants, and from that communication of contraries a most delightfull temper will arise.

MAXIME CIX.

Not to be Reprehensive.

There are some rough men that make a crime of every thing, not so much out
of

of passion, as of a natural disposition. In some they condemn all that they have done ; in others all that they would doe : they so exaggerate every thing, that they make of motes, beams in the eye. Their worse than cruel humour, would be enough to turn the Elysian field into a Galley. But if passion mingle with it, their rigour passes all bounds. On the contrary, Candour interprets every thing favourably, if not the intention, at least the inadvertency.

MAXIME CX.

Not to wait, till one be a setting Sun.

It is a Maxime of Prudence to leave things, before they leave us. It is the part of a wise man to make a triumph of his own defeat, in imitation of the Sun, which, though still glorious in light, is accustomed to retire into a Cloud, that he may not be seen to decline ; and by that means leave it in doubt, whether he be set, or not. He ought to draw out of the way of accidents, that he may not pine away with fretting. Let him not stay till fortune turn her back upon him, lest she should bury him alive, in regard of the affliction that it would give

104 *The Courtiers Manual Oracle, or,*
him ; and dead in respect of his Reputation. A good Horseman gives his Horse sometimes the Reins, that he may keep him from rearing up, and himself from derision, if he should chance to fall in the middle of the carriere. A beauty ought to prevent her glafs by breaking it, before it come to shew her that her charms are fading. *See the Maxime 38.*

MAXIME CXI.

To make Friends.

To have Friends, is a second being. Every Friend is good to his Friend. Amongst Friends all things are pleasant. A man can be worth no more than what others are pleased to value him at. To encline them then to that, we must seize their mouth by their heart. (There is no better charm than good Offices. The best way to have Friends, is to make Friends.) All the good we have in this life, depends on others. We are to live with our Friends or Enemies. Every day we ought to gain one, and if we make him not our confident, render him at least well affected. For some of these will become intimates when they are thoroughly known.

MAX.

MAXIME CXII.

To gain the Heart.

The chief and sovereign cause of all things disdains not to prevent and dispose it, when he hath a mind to work the greatest works. By affection men enter into esteem. Some trust so much to their merit, that they take no care to make themselves be beloved. But the wise man knoweth well, that merit hath a great compass to fetch, when it is not assisted by favour. Good will facilitates all things. It supposes not always that there is wisdom, discretion, goodness, and capacity in the object; but it gives them. It never sees faults, because it avoids seeing of them. Commonly it springs from a material Correspondence, as being of the same Nation, Countrey, Profession or Family. There is another kind of affection more formal and elevated: for it is founded on obligations, reputation or merit. The difficulty is in gaining it; for it is easie to preserve it. By our care we may acquire it, and then make good use thereof.

MAX-

MAXIME CXIII.

In Prosperity to prepare for Adversity.

Summer is the time when we can most commodiously make provisions for Winter. In prosperity men have many Friends, and all things at a cheap rate. It is good to lay up somewhat for bad weather. For there is want of every thing in adversity. Thou'lt doe well not to neglect thy Friends, a day may come when thou wilt think thy self happy to have some, whom thou carest not for at present. Clownish people never have Friends, neither in prosperity, because they know no body; nor in adversity, because then no body knows them.

MAXIME CXIV.

Never to stand in competition.

Every pretension that is contested, ruins the credit. Competition never fails to blacken that it may darken. It is a rare thing to play fair play. Emulation discovers faults, which civility concealed before. Many have lived in great esteem so long as they had no Competitours.
The

The heat of contradiction animates or raises to life infamies which were dead: it digs up again the filth, which time had almost consumed. Competition begins with a manifesto of invectives, calling to its assistance all that it can, and ought not. And though sometimes, nay, most times reproaches be arms of no great value, yet it makes use of them for the satisfaction of a base revenge: and it runs upon that so impetuously, that it covers the faults of the Rival with the dust of Oblivion. Good will hath always been peaceable, and Reputation indulgent.

MAXIME CXV.

To comply with the humours of those with whom one is to live.

Men are very well accustomed to look on ugly faces: they may then accustom themselves to bad humours. There are some churlish Spirits, with whom, nor without whom, one cannot live. It is Prudence then to be accustomed to them, as to ugliness, if one would not be surprized, nor frightened on some occasions. At first they terrify, but by little and little we grow acquainted with them, reflexion preventing what is rude in them,
or

108 *The Courtiers Manual Oracle, or,*
or at least helping us to bear with it.

MAXIME CXVI.

*To deal always with men who are carefull of
their duty.*

One may both engage with them, and engage them. Their duty is their best surety, even then when one is at variance with them. For they always act like themselves: and besides, it is better to fight with honest men, than to triumph over the naughty. There is no safety in dealing with wicked men, because they never stand to what is just and reasonable. And therefore there is no true Friendship ever to be found amongst them. How great soever their affection may seem to be, it is always of base alloy, because it has not any principle of honour. Avoid always the man that hath none; for honour is the throne of honesty. Whoever esteems not honour, esteems not vertue.

MAXIME CXVII.

Never to speak of ones self.

To praise ones self is vanity; to blame, meanness. And what is a defect of wisdom

dom in him that speaks, is a trouble to those that hear him. If that be to be shunned in familiar or domestick conversation, it is more to be avoided in publick, when one speaks and holds some great post, for then the least folly passes for down-right simplicity. It is the same error in Prudence to speak of those who are present. For there is danger of splitting upon one of two rocks, either of flattery or censure.

MAXIME CXVIII.

To affect the name of being obliging.

There needs no more but that, to become plausible. (Civility is a chief part of the knowledge how to live, it is a kind of charm that attracts the love of all men : whereas Clownishness makes one hated and despised. For if incivility proceed from pride, it deserves to be hated ; if from brutishness, it is contemptible. Too much does better in civility, than too little.) But it ought not to be alike to all ; for then it would degenerate into injustice. It is even a duty, and in use amongst Enemies, which shews the power of it. (Whoever honours is honoured.) Gallantry and Civility have that advantage,
that

110 *The Courtiers Manual Oracle, or,*
that all the glory of them rests upon
their Authours.

MAXIME CXIX.

Not to affect to be Churlish.

We ought never to provoke aversion, it comes fast enough without being sought after. There are a great many people who hate at a venture, and know neither how nor why. Hatred is readier than good will. Humour is more enclined to hurt, than to doe service. Some affect to be at odds with every body, either through a spirit of contradiction, or because they are out of humour. When once hatred has got possession of their heart, it is as hard to root it out again, as to undeceive them. Men of wit are feared; backbiters are hated; the presumptuous are despised; scoffers are abhorred; and the singular are forsaken of all men. To be esteemed then, we must esteem. He that would make his Fortune, sets a value upon every thing.

MAX-

MAXIME CXX.

(To comply with the Times.)

Knowledge it self ought to be according to the mode, and it is no small piece of wit to counterfeit the ignorant, where there is no knowledge. The relish and language change according to times. We must not speak in the old fashion; the relish must take with the new. The relish of good heads serves for a rule to others in every profession, and by consequent we are to conform to it, and endeavour to improve our selves. Let a prudent man accommodate himself to the present, whether as to body, or mind, though the past may even seem better unto him. In manners onely that rule is not to be observed, seeing vertue is at all times to be practised. It is not known now a-days, what it is to speak truth, to keep ones word. If any doe so, they pass for old-fashioned people. So that no body imitates them, though all love them. Unhappy age, wherein vertue passes for a stranger, and vice for a current mode! Let a wise man then live as he can, if he cannot as he would. Let him be content with what lot hath given him,

112 *The Courtiers Manual Oracle, or,*
him, as if it were better than what it
hath denied him.

MAXIME CXXI.

Not to make much of nothing.

As there are some that perplex themselves about nothing, so there are others who puzzle themselves about every thing. They speak always like Ministers of State. They take all things either literally or mystically. Few of those things that occasion trouble, are to be minded: else we shall torment our selves much in vain. It's to act the clean contrary way, to lay that to heart, which we should throw behind our backs. Many things that were of some consequence, have signified nothing at all, because men troubled not themselves about them; and others which signified nothing, have become matters of importance, because of the value that was put upon them. In the beginning, it is easie to master all; but not so afterwards. Most commonly the remedy increases the evil. It is not then the worst rule of living, to let things go as they come.

MAX-

MAXIME CXXII.

Authority in Words and Actions.

That quality takes place every where, it presently commands respect. It shews it self over all, in the Conversation, in Harangues, in the carriage, in the look, and in the meen. To take hearts is a great conquest. That is not attained to by a foolish bravery, nor by an imperious way of speaking, but by a certain Ascendant that springs from the greatness of the Genius, and is supported by an extraordinary merit.

MAXIME CXXIII.

The Man without Affectation.

The more there is of perfection, the less there is of affectation. For it is that commonly which spoils the finest things. Affectation is as insupportable to others, as it is painfull to him that uses it, who lives in a continual martyrdom of constraint, that he may be punctual in all things. The most eminent qualities lose their value, if affectation be discovered in them, because they are attributed rather

114 *The Courtiers Manual Oracle, or,*
ther to an artificial constraint, than to
the true character of the person. And
what is natural, hath always been more
agreeable than what is artificial. A man
is looked upon to be a stranger to all that
he affects. The better one does a thing,
the more he ought to hide the care he
takes in doing of it, to the end that all
may take it to be natural. But in avoid-
ing of affectation, have a special care
you fall not into it, by affecting not to
be affected. An accomplished man ought
never to give the least sign that he is per-
swaded of his own merit : the less he ap-
pears solicitous to make it known, the
more all will mind it. He is doubly excel-
lent, who confines all his perfections within
himself, without bragging of any ; he
arrives at the height of plausibility, by
a way not much frequented.

MAXIME CXXIV.

How to be Regrated.

Few have that happiness, and yet it is an
extraordinary one to be regrated by good
men. Commonly people are indifferent
as to those who have finished their time.
There are divers means of meriting the
honour to be regrated. Visibly eminent
quali-

qualities in discharging ones office is a very sure one ; and to please all people is one effectual. Eminence begets dependance ; so soon as it appears that the office stood in need of the man that discharges it ; and not the man of the office. Some doe honour to their places, and others are honoured for them. It is not an advantage to seem good, because one hath a bad successour. For that is not to be truly regretted, but onely to be less hated.

MAXIME CXXV.

Not to be a book of Accounts.

It's a sign of a bad Reputation, to take pleasure in blasting the Reputation of another. Some are willing to wash out, or at least to cover their stains, by exposing those of others. They ease the sense of their own defects, by considering that others have faults also : which is the consolation of fools. These have always a stinking breath, their mouth being the sink of civil uncleanness. The more one digs into such matters, the more he blemishes and defiles himself. There is no man but hath some original failing, whether to the right or to the left. The faults of those who are not much known, are

116 *The Courtiers Manual Oracle, or,*
unknown. Let a prudent man take good
heed that he be not a register of Calum-
nies. That's the way to set up for a very
unpleasant pattern, and to be without a
Soul, though one be alive.

MAXIME CXXVI.

*To commit a folly makes not a fool; but not
to know how to hide it, does.*

If one ought to hide his passions, much
more he ought his faults. All men fail,
but with this difference, that men of sense
palliate the faults committed, and fools
shew those they are about to commit.
Reputation consists more in the manner
of acting, than in what is done. If thou
be not Chast, saith the Proverb, be cau-
tious at least. The faults of great men
are the more remarkable, that they are
the eclipses of great luminaries. How
great soever thy Friendship be, never
trust it with thy failings. Nay, hide
them even from thy self, if it be possible.
At least thou mayst make use of that
other rule of living, which is to know
how to forget.

MAX-

MAXIME CXXVII.

The secret charm, or the unexpressible somewhat ; which the French call Le Je-ne-sai-quoi. And the Spaniards El despejo.

Is the life of great qualities, the breath of words, the soul of actions, and the lustre of all beauties. Other perfections are the ornament of nature; the unexpressible *somewhat*, that of perfections. It is observable even in the way of reasoning. It holds much more of privilege than of study; for it is even above all discipline. It is not limited to facility, but reaches the finest Gallantry. It supposes a free and unstinted mind, and to that unstintedness it adds the last strokes of perfection. Without it all beauty is dead, all gracefulness ungracefull. It hath the pre-eminence over valour, discretion, prudence, nay, and majesty itself. It is a politick high way wherein affairs are soon dispatched; and, in fine, the art of coming off gallantly when one is hampered.

Here it will not be amiss for a Commentary, to give the translation of the whole thirteenth Chapter of the Heroe, where he gives a notion a little more

118 *The Courtiers Manual Oracle, or, distinct of what he calls the Despejo.*

The unexpressible *somewhat*, says he, is the soul of all qualities, the life of all perfections, the vigour of actions, the gracefulness of language, and the charm of all that takes. It agreeably amuses the conceit and imagination, but it is inexplicable. It is something that enhaunces the lustre of all beauties, it is a metaphysical and formal beauty. Other perfections adorn nature, but the *somewhat* adorns the ornaments themselves. So that it is the perfection even of perfection, accompanied with a transcendent beauty, and universal gracefulness. It consists in a certain taking air, in an agreeableness that hath no name, but which is seen in speaking, in the ways of acting, and in reasoning. What is most lovely in it comes from nature, and the rest depends on reflexion. For it hath never been subjected to any imperious precept, but always to the best of every kind. It is called a charm, because it enchants hearts; a fine air, because it is imperceptible; a brisk air, because of its activity; a taking air, because of its politeness; jollity and good humour, for its facility and complaisance. For the desire and yet impossibility of defining it, have got it all these names. It's to doe it wrong, to confound it

it with facility ; for that comes but at a great distance after it. It advances as far as the finest Gallantry. Though it suppose an entire disengagedness, yet it is devoted to perfection. Actions have their Midwife, and they are obliged to this unexpressible *somewhat* when they are well delivered. Without it they are still-born, without it the best things are unfavoury. Nay, it is not so much the accessory neither, but that it is sometime the principal. It serves not onely for ornament, but also for support and direction in affairs. For as it is the soul of beauty, so is it the spirit of Prudence, as it is the principle of gracefulness, so is it the life of valour. In a Captain, it goes hand in hand with bravery ; and in a King with Prudence. In the shock of a battel, it is no less conspicuous in its assured and undaunted air, than in the skill of handling arms, and in resolution. It renders a General master of himself, and then of all others. It is as impetuous on Horseback, as it is majestick under the Canopy. In the Pulpit it gives a grace to words. By its golden thread, *Henry IV.* The *Theseus* of *France* dextrously guided his way through the Labyrinth of so many obstacles and affairs.

For a gloss to this description of the

120 *The Courtiers Manual Oracle, or,*
Despejo, which is very metaphyscal what
Father Bonhours says in the fifth Confe-
rence of Aristus and Eugenius, may serve.

It is far easier to perceive it, than to
know it, saith *Aristus*. It would be no
longer *I know not what*, if one knew
what it were; its nature is to be incom-
prehensible and inexplicable. *And a page*
after. To take it right, it is neither beau-
ty, nor good meen, nor good grace, nor
briskness of humour, nor sparkling wit,
seeing we dayly see men, who have all
these qualities, and yet want that which
pleases: and others, on the contrary, who
please much, without any thing that is
agreeable, except this unaccountable luck.
So that the certaineest thing that can be
said of it, is that the greatest merit sig-
nifies nothing without it, and that it need-
eth no more but it self to work a very
great effect. It is to no purpose to be
handsome, witty, blithe, &c. if the un-
expressible *somewhat* be wanting, all these
fair qualities are, as it were, dead: but al-
so what imperfections soever one may
have in body or mind, with that sole ad-
vantage he is sure to please. This *somewhat*
sets all to rights. From thence it
follows, says *Eugenius*, that it is an agreea-
bleness which animates beauty, and the
other natural perfections, which corrects
ugliness

ugliness and other natural defects; that it is a charm and an air that insinuates into all actions and words; that enters into the gate, laughing, tone of the voice, and into the least gesture of the person that pleases. *And four or five pages after.* He saith that the Spaniards have also their *No so que*, which they bring in at every turn, besides their *Donayre*, their *Brio*, and their *Despejo*, which *Gracian* calls, *Alma de toda prenda, realce de los mesmos realces, perfeccion de la misma perfeccion*, and which according to the same Authour, is above the reach of our thoughts and words. *Lisongea la inteligencia, y estraña la explicacion.* This I mention here, to shew, that the *Despejo*, is an *I know not what*, which hath no name: and that all those that are given to it, are pretty words, which the learned have invented to flatter their ignorance. *These are the terms of Father Bonhours.*

MAXIME CXXVIII.

The high Courage.

Is one of the principal conditions required in a Heroe, inasmuch as such a courage spurs him on to all that is great, refines his discerning, raises his heart, elevates

vates his thoughts and actions, and disposes him to majesty. It makes its way through, wherever it is : and when hard luck is cross to it, it essays all ways to come off with honour. The more it is confined within the bounds of possibility, the more it labours its enlargement. Magnanimity, Generosity, and all Heroick Qualities, own it for their original.

The strong head, saith *Gracian*, chap. 4. of his *Heroe*, is for Philosophers ; the good Tongue for Oratours ; the Breast for Wrestlers, the Arms for Souldiers, the Feet for Runners, the Shoulders for Porters, and the great Heart for Kings. The Heart of *Alexander* was an Arch-heart, seeing a whole world lodged easily in a corner of it, and that six more could have found room therein. That of *Julius Cæsar* was very great ; seeing it found no mean betwixt *all* and *nothing*. The heart is the stomach of Fortune. It digests alike her favours and disgraces. A great stomach is not loaded with much food. A Giant is starved with that which surfeits a Dwarf.

That Prodigy of Valour, *Charles*, Dauphin of *France*, and afterward King, the seventh of that name, being informed that his Father, and the King of *England* his Competitour, had got him declared in
Parlia-

Parliament incapable of succeeding, answered boldly, That he appealed from it. And when he was asked with admiration, To whom? To my Courage, and the point of my Sword, Replied he. The effect followed it. *Charles Emmanuel*, the *Achilles* of *Savoy*, defeated four hundred *Cuirassiers*, having but four men to stand by him: and perceiving that all were surprized at it, he said, that in the greatest dangers, there was no company so good as a great heart. The sufficiency of the heart supplies what is otherwise wanting. The King of *Arabia* shewing his Courtiers a Damask Cutlass that had been presented to him, it was the opinion of them all, that the onely fault they found in it, was, that it was too short. But the Kings Son said, That there was no Weapon too short for a brave Cavalier, seeing there needed no more but to advance one step, to make it long enough.

MAXIME CXXIX.

Never to Complain.

Complaints always ruine Credit. They rather excite a passion to offend us, than compassion to comfort us. They make way for those that hear them, to doe the same

same to us, that those have done, of whom we complain, and the knowledge of the injury done by the first, serves the second for an excuse. Some by complaining of past offences, give occasion for future ; and instead of the remedy and consolation which they pretend, they give pleasure to others, and even attract their contempt. It's far better policy to publish the obligations that one hath to people, thereby to stir up others to oblige also. To speak often of favours received from Persons absent, is to court the like from those who are present ; it is a selling the credit of the one to the other. Thus a prudent man ought never to publish disgraces and failings, but always favours and honours. And this serves to preserve the esteem of Friends, and to contain Enemies in their duty.

MAXIME CXXX.

To doe, and make it appear.

Things go not for what they are, but for what they appear to be. To know how to doe, and to know how to shew it, is a double knowledge. What is not seen, is as if it had no being. Reason it self loses its Authority, when it appears
not

not to be so. [There are more mistaken men, than knowing men. Deceit carries it cleverly, in regard that things are onely considered by the outside. Many things appear quite different from what they are. A good out-side is the best recommendation of internal perfection.

MAXIME CXXXI.

The procedure of a gallant Man.

Souls have their gallantry and gentility, from which arises a great heart. That is a perfection not to be found in all sorts of men, because it supposes a stock of generosity. Its first care is to speak well of Enemies, and still to serve them better. In occasions of revenge it appears most conspicuously. It neglects not these occasions, but it is onely to make a good use of them, by preferring the glory of pardoning, before the pleasure of a victorious revenge. That is even a politick procedure, seeing the quaintest reason of state never affects these advantages, because it affects nothing : and when right obtains them, modesty dissembles them.

MAX-

MAXIME CXXXII.

To advise and revise.

To revise is the surest way, especially when the advantage is certain: It is always good to take time, whether it be for granting a thing, or for better deliberating. New thoughts come into ones mind, which confirm and fortify resolution. If the matter be to give, the gift is more esteemed, because of the discerning of him that gives it, than for the pleasure of not having expected it. What hath been desired, hath always been most esteemed. If it be a thing to be refused, time facilitates the manner of it, by letting the No ripen, untill the season be come. Besides, most commonly so soon as the first heat of desire is over, the rigour of a denial is taken with indifference. They who demand with speed, are to be heard at leisure. That's the true way to avoid being surprized.

MAX:

MAXIME CXXXIII.

*Rather to be a Fool with all Men, than
Wise all alone.*

For if all be such, there is nothing to be lost, cry Politicians: whereas if Wisdom be singular, it will pass for folly. Custome then is to be followed. Sometimes to know nothing, or at least to seem so, is the greatest knowledge. We must of necessity live with others, and the ignorant are most numerous. To live alone, one must hold much of the Nature of God, or to be altogether of that of Beasts. But for qualifying the Aphorism, I would say, *Rather Wise with others, than a Fool without Company.* Some affect to be singular in *Chimera's*.

MAXIME CXXXIV.

*To have a double portion of the things that
are necessary for life.*

Is to live doubly. We must not restrict our selves to one thing onely, even though it be excellent. All things ought to be double, and especially that which is usefull and delightfull. The Moon
that

128 *The Courtiers Manual Oracle, or,*
that changes so often, is not so variable
as the will of man, so fickle is that same
will. We ought therefore to put a bar-
riere to our inconstancy. Take it then
for a chief rule of the art of living, to
have in a double portion all that serves
for convenience. As Nature hath given
us pairs of the Members which are most
necessary and most exposed to danger, so
ought Art to double the things, whereon
the happiness of life depends.

MAXIME CXXXV.

Not to have a spirit of Contradiction.

For that's the way to become ridicu-
lous, nay, and insupportable. Wisdom
will never fail to conspire against that
Spirit. It's to be ingenious to find diffi-
culties in all things; but it is foolish to be
an Opiniatour. Such men turn the sweet-
test conversation into a skirmish, and are
by consequent greater Enemies to their
Friends, than to those that frequent not
their company. The more savoury the
piece of fish is that we put into our
mouth, the more we find the bone that
gets betwixt our teeth. Contradiction
hath the same effect in pleasant Conver-
sation. They are Fools and fantastical
ones,

ones, that are not satisfied to be Beasts,
unless they be wild Beasts.

MAXIME CXXXVI.

*To take things aright, and presently to
nick the point.*

Many fetch a tedious compass of words,
without ever coming to the knot of the
business: they make a thousand turnings
and windings, that tire themselves and
others, without ever arriving at the point
of importance. And that proceeds from
the confusion of their understanding,
which cannot clear it self. They lose
time and patience in what ought to be
let alone, and then they have no more to
bestow upon what they have omitted.

MAXIME CXXXVII.

The Wise Man is sufficient for himself.

A Grecian Sage was to himself in stead
of all things; and all that he had was al-
ways with him. If it be true, that an
universal Friend is sufficient to render one
as contented, as if he possessed *Rome*, and
all the rest of the Universe: be thine
own Friend, and thou mayst live all alone.

K

What

130 *The Courtiers Manual Oracle, or,*
What more can be wanting to thee, if
thou hast no sweeter conversation, nor
greater pleasure than with thy self? thou
wilt onely depend upon thy self, for it is
a sovereign blifs to be like the Sovereign
Being. He that can so live all alone, will
hold nothing of the Beast, but much of
the Wise Man, and all of God.)

MAXIME CXXXVIII.

*The Art to let things go as they can go,
especially when the Sea is tempestuous.*

There are Tempests and Hurricanes in
the life of man. It is Prudence to put
into a Haven, to let them blow over.
Most commonly the Remedies increase
the Evil. When the Sea of humours is
in agitation, let Nature work; if it be
the Sea of Manners, leave it to Morality.
There is as much skill required in a Phy-
sician, in not prescribing, as in prescri-
bing: and sometimes the excellency of
the Art consists in applying no Remedy.
The way then to calm popular gusts, is
to be quiet. Then to yield to the times,
will get the victory afterwards. A Well
will be troubled if it be in the least stir-
red, and its water becomes clear again,
by ceasing to dabble in it. There is no
better

better remedy for some disorders, than to let them alone. For at long run they stop of themselves.

MAXIME CXXXIX.

To know unlucky days.

For there are some, wherein nothing will succeed. It is to no purpose to change the Game, the luck will still be the same. At the second bout, we are to take heed, if luck be for us or against us. Understanding hath its days. For no man was ever alike able at all hours. There is good luck in reasoning truly, as there is in writing a Letter well. All perfections have their season, and beauty is not always in its quarter. Discretion sometimes belies it self, now in ceding, and by and by in exceeding. In fine, to succeed well, one must have his day. As all things succeed ill to some, so every thing prospers with others, and that too with less pains and care: and some find their business ready done to their hand. Wit hath its days; Genius its Character; and all things their star. When it is your day, you are not to lose a minute. But a prudent man ought not positively to pronounce, that one day is happy, be-
K 2 cause

132 *The Courtiers Manual Oracle, or,*
cause of his good success; nor that another is unlucky, because of his bad; the one being, perhaps, but the effect of chance; and the other of mistimeing.

MAXIME CXL.

To hit at first upon the best of every thing.

Is the best mark of a good discerning. The Bee goes immediately to the sweet, that it may have whereof to make honey; and the Waspe to the bitter, to suck in poison. It is so in discernings; the one sticks to the best, and the other to the worst. In all things there is somewhat that is good, and especially in a book, which commonly is made with study. Some are of so awkward a mind, that amongst a thousand perfections, they'll hit upon the onely fault that is to be found; and speak of nothing else, as if they were onely cut out for common sewers of the filth of the will and wit of others: and for keeping a Register of all the faults which they see. That is rather the punishment of their bad discerning, than the exercise of their subtilty. They spend their life ill, because they onely feed on naughty things. Happier are they, who amongst a thousand faults at first

first discover a perfection that happened to be there by chance.

MAXIME CXLI.

Not to listen to ones self.

It's worth little to be satisfied with ones self, if one content not others. Commonly self-esteem is punished by universal contempt. He that pays himself, remains a debtor to all others. It is misbecoming for one to speak, that he may hear himself. If it be folly to speak to ones self, it is doubly so to listen to himself before others. It is a fault in great men to speak with an imperious tone: and that which stuns those who hear them; at every word they say, their ears importunately beg applause or flattery. The presumptuous speak also by echo: and since the conversation moves upon the stilts of Pride, every word comes guarded with this impertinent exclamation: *Rarely well said! Ah that's a sweet saying.*

MAXIME CXLII.

*Never to espouse a bad party in spight to
an Adversary, who hath taken the better.*

He that does it, is half overcome, and at length will be constrained wholly to yield. That is never a good way to be revenged. If thine Adversary hath had the skill to take the better, take good heed not to commit the folly of opposing him, by espousing the worse. Obstinacy in actions engages so much the more than that in words, that there is far more risque in doing, than in saying. It is the custome of the head strong to regard neither truth in contradicting; nor profit in disputing. A wise man hath always reason on his side, and never falls into passion. He either prevents or retreats. So that if his Rival be a Fool, his folly makes him change his course, and go to the other extreme: whereby the condition of his Adversary becomes worse. The onely means then to make him forsake the good party, is to strike in with it, seeing that will move him to embrace the bad.

MAX-

MAXIME CXLIII.

To take heed not to run into Paradoxes, by shunning to be vulgar.

Both extremes equally discredit. Every project that thwarts gravity, is a kind of folly. A Paradox is a certain plausible Cheat, that at first surprizes by its novelty and its edge; but afterwards loses its vogue, when the falsity of it is once known in practice. It is a kind of quacking, which in matter of Politicks, is the ruine of States. They who cannot attain to Heroism, or who have not the courage to advance towards it by the way of vertue, run into the Paradox; which makes them to be admired by fools, but serves to manifest the Prudence of others. The Paradox is a proof of an ill-tempered mind, and by consequent, most opposite to Prudence. And if sometimes it be not founded on what is false, it is founded at least on what is uncertain, to the great prejudice of affairs.

MAXIME CXLIV.

*Under the veil of another man's interest,
to find ones own.*

Is a most proper stratageme for obtaining what one intends.) The Confessours themselves teach this pious Craft as to what concerns salvation. It is a most important dissimulation, seeing the profit that is pretended, serves as a bait to attract the will. It seems to another that his interest goes first, when it is onely to make way for thy pretension. One must never enter hap hazard, but especially where there is danger at the bottom. And when one hath to doe with those, whose first word is always *No*, he must not shew them what he aims at, lest they may see Reasons for not condescending to it: and chiefly if he foresee that they have an aversion thereto. This advice is for those that can turn their wits to any thing; which is the quintessence of subtilty.)

MAXIME CXLV.

Not to shew the sore place.

For every one will have a hit at it.
Have

Have a care also not to complain of it, seeing malice always attacks on the weaker side.) Resentment serves onely to divert it. Nothing pleases malice better than to put one off of the hinges. It lets fall tart words, and sets all Engines at work, untill it hath found out the quick. A man of parts then ought never to discover his evil, whether it be personal or hereditary : seeing Fortune her self takes pleasure sometimes to wound in that place, where she knows the pain will be sharper. It mortifies always to the quick : and by consequent, one must never let it be known either what mortifies, or what quickens ; that he may make the one to cease, and the other continue.

MAXIME CXLVI.

To look into the inside.

It is commonly found that things are far different from what they appear to be ; and ignorance that onely looked on the bark, is undeceived so soon, as it goes in, The lie is always the first in every thing, it draws in Fools by a vulgar *They say*, which runs from mouth to mouth ; truth arrives always last, and very late, because

138 *The Courtiers Manual Oracle, or,*
cause it hath a lame Guide, which is
time. The Wise keep for it always one
half of that faculty which nature hath
purposely made double. Deceit is wholly
superficial: and those who are so them-
selves, are presently caught. Discerning
retires inward, that so it may be the
more esteemed by the wise.

MAXIME CXLVII.

Not to be inaccessible.

Let a man be never so perfect, he some-
times stands in need of Council. He
that will take none is an incurable fool.
The most intelligent man ought to make
room for good advice. Sovereignty it
self ought not to exclude docility. Some
men are incurable, because they are inac-
cessible. They precipitate themselves,
because no body dares come near them to
hinder them from it. A door must then
be left open to Friendship, and by it re-
lief will enter. A Friend ought to have
full liberty to speak, nay, and to re-
prove. The Opinion that is conceived
of his Fidelity and Prudence ought to
give him that Authority. But withall,
that familiarity is not to be common to
all. It is enough to have one secret con-
fident,

fidest, whose correction is valued, and who is to be made use of as a looking-glass for undeceiving.

MAXIME CXLVIII.

To have the Art of Converſing.

Is the means whereby a man shews his own value. Of all humane actions there is none that requires greater circumspection, seeing it is the most usual exercise of life. There is much Reputation to be gained or lost in it. If judgement be necessary for writing a letter, which is a premeditated conversation by paper: far more it is required in ordinary conversation, which brings the merit of people under a sudden Test. The Masters of the Art feel the pulse of the Wit by the Tongue, according to the saying of a Sage, *Speak, if thou would'st have me to know thee.* Some maintain, that the true Art of conversing, is to doe it without Art: and that conversation, if it be betwixt good Friends, ought to be as easie as ones cloaths. For when it is a conference of Ceremony and Respect, it is to be performed with more reserve, to shew, that one hath much of the skill of living. The way to succeed well in that,
is

140 *The Courtiers Manual Oracle, or,*
is to follow the character of those mens
wit, who are as the judges of conversa-
tion. Take heed not to be vain in cen-
suring of words, which will make thee
pass for a Grammarian; nor in controlling
and chopping reasons, for then all will
avoid thee. To speak to the purpose is
more necessary than to speak eloquently.

MAXIME CXLIX.

*To be able to cast the blame and misfor-
tunes upon others.-*

It is a thing of great use amongst those
who govern, to have Bucklers against
hatred, that's to say, men upon whom
the censure, and publick grievances may
light : and that is not the effect of ina-
bility, as malice imagines ; but of an in-
dustry elevated above the understanding
of the people. Every thing cannot suc-
ceed, nor all men be contented. There
ought to be in that case then a strong
head, that may serve as a But to all the
shot, and bear the reproaches of all faults
and miscarriages, at the cost of his own
Ambition.

MAX-

MAXIME CL.

To be able to put a value upon what one doeth.

It is not enough that things are good in themselves, because all men see not to the bottom, nor are able to discern. Most part follow the multitude, and stop not but where the greatest concourse is. It's a great point to be able to set an esteem upon ones Commodity, either by praising it ; (for praise is the spur to desire) or by giving it a pretty name, which is a good way to exalt : but all this must be done without affectation. Not to write but for able men, is an universal hook, because every one thinks himself to be so ; and for those who are not, privation will serve as a spur to desire. Ones projects must never be called common, nor easie, for that's the way to make them be thought trivial. All men are pleased with singularities, as being most desirable both to the humour and mind.

MAX-

MAXIME CLI.

To think to day what may happen to morrow, and a long time after.

The greatest fore-sight, is to have hours for it. There is nothing fortuitous for those who forecast ; nor any dangerous case for such as expect it. We must not put off the thoughts of danger till we be sinking ; we must be before-hand, and by mature consideration prevent the worst that might happen. The Pillow is a dumb *Sibylle*. To sleep upon a thing that is to be done, is better than to be awaked by a thing already done. Some doe first, and afterwards think : which is rather to look for excuses than expedients. Others neither think before nor after. A man's whole life should be employed in thinking that he may not mistake his way. Reflexion and fore-sight give us the advantage of anticipating life.

MAXIME CLII.

Never to keep company that may eclipse ones lustre.

What excells in perfection, excells in esteem.

esteem. The most accomplished will always have the first rank. If his Companion have any part in the praise, it will be but his leavings. The Moon shines, whilst she is alone amongst the stars : but so soon as the Sun begins to appear, she either shines no more, or disappears. Never approach him that may eclipse thee, but him that may set off thy lustre. In this manner *Martial's* cunning *Fabulla* found the way of appearing beautifull, by the ugliness or agedness of her Companions. (One must never run the risque of being incommoded side-ways, nor doe honour to others at the expence of ones own Reputation.) It is good to frequent the society of eminent persons for shaping ones self : but when one is completed, to strike in with those of inferiour size. To model thy self, chuse the most complete ; and when thou art fashioned, frequent the inferiour.

MAXIME CLIII.

To shun being obliged to fill the place of a great Man.

If one engage in that, he ought to be sure to exceed him. For to equal a Predecessour, one must have double his worth.

worth. As it requires Prudence and skill in him that succeeds, to be such, as that he may be regrated : so likewise does it Art, that he may have a care not to be eclipsed by him that went before him. It is very difficult to fill up a great vacancy, seeing commonly the first appears the best : and by consequent equality is not enough, because the former is in possession. It is therefore necessary to surpass him, to dispossess him of the advantage he hath of being most esteemed.

MAXIME CLIV.

Not to be easie neither to believe, nor to love.

It's an argument of maturity of judgment, to be hard to believe. Nothing is more common than to lie, to believe then, ought to be extraordinary. He who is apt to move, finds himself often put out of countenance. But special care is to be had not to seem to doubt the credit of another : for that passeth from incivility to an offence, seeing it is to reckon him either a deceiver, or deceived : nor is all the hurt there neither. For, besides that, not to believe is the sign of a liar, the liar being subject to
two

two misfortunes, not to believe, and not to be believed. A suspension of judgment in him that hears, is laudable: but he that speaks may refer to his Authour. It is also a kind of imprudence to be easie to love. For if one lie in speech, one may also lie in fact: and that cheat is more pernicious than the other.

MAXIME CLV.

The Art of restraining Passions.

Let a prudent reflexion prevent, if it be possible, the usual transports of the vulgar. That will be no difficult thing to a prudent man. The first step to moderation, is to perceive that we are falling into passion. By that means we enter the lists with a full power over our selves, and may examine how far it is necessary to give way to our resentment. With that swaying reflexion, we may be angry, and put a stop to it as we please. Strive to know where and when it is fit to stop. For it is the hardest thing in running to stop upon the spot. It is a great mark of judgment to stand firm and undisturbed amidst the Sallies of passion. Every excess of passion degenerates from reason. But with this ma-

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gisterial

146 *The Courtiers Manual Oracle, or,*
gisterial circumspection, Reason will never be disordered, nor transgress the bounds of its duty. To be able to devour a passion, we must always hold the reins fast. He who governs himself in this manner, will be reckoned the wisest man; as the foolishlest if he do otherwise.

MAXIME CLVI.

Friends by Election.

Friends ought to abide the test of discretion, and the trial of fortune. It is not enough that they have had the suffrage of the will, if they have not also that of the understanding. Though that be the most important point of life, yet there is least care taken about it. (Some make their Friends by the intervention of others, and most part by chance. We judge of men by the Friends he hath. A knowing man never chose ignorants.) But though a man may please, we must not therefore say that he is an intimate Friend. For that may proceed rather from the pleasantness of his humour and ways, than from any assurance that one hath of his capacity. There are lawfull Friendships, and bastard Friendships. These are for pleasure; but the others for more security

security in acting. There are few friends of the person, but many of the fortune. The good wit of a Friend is better than all the good will of others. Take thy Friends then by choice, and not by lot. A prudent Friend eases many troubles: whereas one who is not so, multiplies and encreases them. If thou would'st not lose thy Friends, never wish them a great Fortune.

MAXIME CLVII.

Not to be mistaken in People.

That is the worst, and yet most ordinary mistake. It is better to be deceived in the Price, than in the Commodity: And there is nothing that one ought more narrowly to look into. There is a great deal of difference betwixt knowing of things, and knowing of persons: and it is quaint Philosophy, to discern the minds and humours of men. It is as necessary to study them, as to study Books.

MAXIME CLVIII.

To know how to use Friends.

That's a thing that requires great skill.

148 *The Courtiers Manual Oracle, or,*
Some are good to be made use of at a distance; and others to be near us. One that hath not been fit for Conversation, may be good for Correspondence. Distance effaces some certain defects, which presence rendered unsupportable. (In Friends we are not onely to look for pleasure, but for profit also.) A Friend ought to have the three qualities of a *Being*, or as the Schools say of an *Ens*: Unity, Goodness, and Truth: in respect that a Friend stands in stead of all things. There are but very few that can be given for good: and by not knowing how to chuse them, the number becomes less. To know how to preserve them, is more than to have been able to make them. Look out for such as may continue long: and though in the beginning they may be new, it is enough to content thee, that they may become old. To take things aright, those are the best, which are not acquired, till we have eat a bushel of Salt with them. There is no such horrid a Desart, as to live without Friends. Friendship multiplies blessings, and divides crosses. It is the onely remedy against bad Fortune. It is the vent by which the Soul discharges it self.

MAXIME CLIX.

To know how to bear with Fools.

Wise Men have always been bad-sufferers. Impatience grows with knowledge. A vast reach is hard to be contented. In the judgment of *Epictetus*, the best Maxime of life is to *Suffer*. He hath placed one half of Wisdom in that. If all imperinences are to be born with, without doubt there is need of much patience. Sometimes we suffer most from those on whom we depend most ; and that serves to exercise us to patience. From suffering, springs that inestimable peace, which makes the happiness of this world. Let him that finds not himself in a humour to suffer, withdraw, if he be able to bear with himself.

MAXIME CLX.

To speak sparingly to our Competitours for Caution-sake, and to others for Civility.

One hath always time to let slip his words, but not to retain them. We ought to speak as men do in their last Wills, seeing the fewer the words are,

150 *The Courtiers Manual Oracle, or,*
the less will be the Law-suits. We are
to accustome our selves to that, in mat-
ters of no importance, that we may not
fail in it, when it is important. Silence
holds much of Divinity. Whosoever is
ready to speak, is always upon the point
of being cast and Convicted.

MAXIME CLXI.

*To know the failings wherein one takes
pleasure.*

The most accomplished man hath al-
ways some, whereof he is either the Hus-
band or Gallant. They are to be found
in the wit, and the greater that is, the
greater, and more remarkable are they:
not but that he who has them, knows
them; but because he loves them. To
be passionate, and to be passionate for
vices, are two evils. These faults are
the blemishes of perfection. They as
much offend those who see them as they
please those who have them. Here is
the fair occasion for one to overcome him-
self, and to put the cap-stone upon his
other perfections. Every one levels at
that work, and in stead of praising all
that is to be admired, stop short to Cen-
sure a fault, which, as they say, disfigures
all the rest.

MAX-

MAXIME CLXII.

To be able to triumph over Jealousie and Envy.

Though it be Prudence to slight Envy, yet that contempt is a small matter now a-days: Gallantry works a far better effect. He cannot be sufficiently praised, who speaks well of him, that speaks ill. There is not any revenge more Heroick, than that which torments Envy, by doing good. Every good success is a strapado for the envious man, and the glory of his Corrivall is a Hell to him. To make ones happiness to be a poison to his Enviars, is held to be the most rigorous punishment that they can endure. Enviars die as often as they hear the praises of the Envied revive. Both contend for immortality, but the one to live always in glory, and the other always in misery. The Trumpet of Fame, which sounds to immortalize the one, pronounces death to the other, by condemning him to the punishment of expecting in vain that the cause of his pains should cease.

MAXIME CLXIII.

One must never lose the favour of him that is happy, to take compassion on a Wretch.

Commonly that which makes the happiness of some, makes the misery of others: and you may see one that could not be happy, if many others were not miserable. It is the property of wretches to gain peoples good will. For all take pleasure to gratifie with an unprofitable favour, those who are persecuted by Fortune. Nay it hath sometimes happened that a man hated of all the world in his prosperity, hath been pitied by all people in his misfortune; the fall having changed into compassion the desire of revenge. Let a man of wit then take heed of the turns of Fortune. There are some that never associate but with the unfortunate. He, whom they shunned yesterday because of his prosperity, has them for Companions to day, because of his adversity. That Conduct is sometimes the mark of a good nature, but never of a good wit.

M A X.

MAXIME CLXIV.

To let fly some shot in the Air.

Is the way to know how that which is intended to be done, will be received, especially, when they are matters, the issue and approbation whereof is doubtful. By that means we are sure to hit our mark, and always at liberty to retreat or advance. Thus we pump out mens minds, and know where it is best to set our foot. That prevention is most necessary, for asking pertinently, placing Friendship aright, and for governing well.

MAXIME CLXV.

To wage War fairly.

A brave man may, indeed, be induced to make War, but not to make it otherwise than he ought. All men ought to act according to what they themselves are, and not to what others are. Gallantry is most plausible, when it is used towards an Enemy. We are not onely to overcome by force, but also by the manner. To Conquer basely is not to overcome, but to be Conquered rather.

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154 *The Courtiers Manual Oracle, or,*
Generosity hath always had the advantage. A worthy man never makes use of forbidden Weapons. To employ the wrack of an old Friendship, in framing a new hatred, is to use such arms. For it is not lawfull to take the advantage of a trust and confidence in revenge. Whatever looks like treachery infects the good name. The least atome of baseness is inconsistent with the generosity of great Souls. A brave man ought to make it his glory to be such, that if gallantry, generosity and fidelity, were lost in the world, they might be found in his heart.

MAXIME CLXVI.

*To distinguish betwixt the man of Words,
and the man of Deeds.*

This distinction is as absolutely necessary as that of the friend of the person, and the friend of the employment. For they are very different friends. He is out of the way, who doing no bad Deeds, gives no good Words: And he again more, who giving no bad Words, does no good Deeds. Now a-days men feed not upon words, seeing they are but wind; nor do they live on Civilities, these being onely a formal juggle. To
go

go a birding with a light, is the true way to dazle the birds eyes. The vain and fools are content with wind. Words ought to be the pledges of actions, and by consequent have their value. Trees that bear no fruit, and have onely leaves, have commonly no heart. It is necessary to know them all ; the one, to make profit of them ; and the other, to stand under their shade.

MAXIME CLXVII.

To be able to help ones self.

In troublesome encounters, there is no better company than a great heart : and if this come to fail, it ought to be assisted by the parts that are about it. Crosses are not so great for those who can tell how to assist themselves. Yield not to Fortune. For she'll become insupportable to thee. Some give themselves so little help in their troubles, that they increase them, because they know not how to bear them with courage. He that understands himself well, finds in reflexion relief to his weakness. A man of judgment comes off in all things advantageously, were it even to come down from the stars.

MAX-

MAXIME CLXVIII.

Not to be Monstrous.

All the Hair-brained, Vain, Opinionative, Capricious, Self-conceited, Extravagant, Fawners, Buffoons, News-mongers, Authors of Paradoxes, Phanaticks, and in a word, all sorts of irregular persons: all these, I say, are so many Monsters of impertinence. The ugliness of the Soul is always more monstrous, than the deformity of body, seeing it more dishonours the beauty of its original. But who shall correct so great and general a disorder? where reason is wanting, direction has nothing to doe: inasmuch as that which ought to be the cause of a serious reflexion upon that which gives occasion to publick laughter, makes men fall into the vanity of believing, they are admired.

MAXIME CLXIX.

To take more heed not to miss once, than to hit an hundred times.

When the Sun shines no body minds him; but when he is eclipsed, all consider him. The vulgar will keep no account
of

of your hits, but of your misses. The bad are more known by murmurings, than the good by applauses: and many have not been known untill they fell. All good successes put together are not enough to obliterate one bad one. Undeceive thy self then, and take it for a certain truth, that Envy will observe all thy faults, but not one of thy good actions.

MAXIME CLXX.

To be sparing in all things.

That's the way to succeed in matters of importance. One must not at every turn employ all his Capacity, nor shew all his strength. One must be sparing even in knowledge: for that serves to double the value of it. There is a necessity of having always something to trust to, when the question is how to get out of the mire. The relief is more considerable than the fight, because it is always accompanied with the reputation of valour. Prudence keeps always to the surer side. And in that sense the ingenious Paradox is true: *That the half is more than the whole.*

MAX-

MAXIME CLXXI.

Not to abuse Favour.

Great Friends are for great occasions. Much favour is not to be employed in matters of small importance: that's scattering of it. The sheet Anchor is always reserved for the last extremity. If we squander away the *much* for the *little*, what will remain for the next need? There is nothing now a-days better than Protectours, nor more precious than favour. It does and undoes, even so far as to give wit, and take it. Fortune hath always been as much a Step-mother to the Wise, as Nature and Fame have been favourable unto them. It's better to know how to preserve our Friends, than our Estates.

MAXIME CLXXII.

Never to engage with him that hath nothing to lose.

To doe otherwise, is to fight at a disadvantage. For the other enters the lists unconcernedly. Seeing he hath lost all shame, he hath no more to lose, nor to husband;

husband ; and so he runs hand over head into all extravagances. Reputation, which is an inestimable value, ought never to be exposed to so great risques. Having cost a great many years in purchasing, it comes to be lost in a moment. A small breeze of wind is enough to freeze a great deal of sweat. A Prudent Man is withheld by the consideration that he hath much to lose. When he thinks of his Reputation, he presently considers the danger of losing it. And by means of that reflexion he proceeds with so great reserve, that Prudence has time to retire in time, and to secure his Credit. One can never be able to recover by a Victory what he hath already lost in exposing himself to lose.

MAXIME CLXXIII.

Not to be a Glass in Conversation, and much less in Friendship.

Some are easie to break, and thereby discover their insolidity. They fill themselves with discontent, and others with distaste. They shew themselves to be tenderer than the Eyes, because they are not to be touched neither in jest nor earnest. Motes even offend them ; (for
they

160 *The Courtiers Manual Oracle, or,*
they have no need of Apparitions.) They
who keep them company, ought to put
an extreme constraint upon themselves,
and study to observe all their nicities.
There is no stirring before them, for the
least gesture disturbs them. Commonly
they are a self-abounding kind of people,
slaves to their humour, and Idolatours of
their silly point of honour, for which
they would turn the world topsie-turvey.
He that truly loves, is of the nature of a
Diamond, both as to its lastingness, and
its being hard to break.

MAXIME CLXXIV.

Not to live too fast.

To know how to distribute time, is to
know how to enjoy life. To many there
is much of life remaining, but they want
the felicity of it. They lavish away
pleasures: (for they enjoy them not,)
and when they are gone on a great way,
they would be willing, if they could, to
come back again. These are the Postil-
lions of life, who to the swift motion of
time, add the rapidity of their own
minds. They would devour in one day
what hardly they could be able to digest
in all their life time. They live in plea-
sures

fores as men that would taste of them all before hand. They eat up future years, and seeing they doe all things in haste, they have soon done with all. The desire of knowledge it self ought to be moderated, that we may not know things imperfectly. There are more days than prosperities. Make haste to doe, and enjoy at leisure. It is better to have affairs done than to doe, and the contentment which lasts, is to be preferred before that which ends.

MAXIME CLXXV.

The substantial Man.

He that is so, is not satisfied with those who are not so. Unhappy is that eminence that hath nothing substantial in it. All who appear to be men, are not all so. There are some artificial men, that conceive Chimera's, and are brought to bed of mistakes. There are others that resemble them, and set a value upon them, being better satisfied with the uncertainty that a false shew promises, because the *much* is there; than with the certainty that offers truth, because that appears little: but at long run their Caprices come to an unlucky end, inasmuch as they

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have

162 *The Courtiers Manual Oracle, or,*
have no solid foundation. Nothing but
truth can give a true Reputation; and
nothing but substance turns to account.
One cheat stands in need of a great many
others, and by consequent, the whole
building is but imaginary: and seeing it is
founded in the air, it must of necessity
fall to the ground. An ill conceived de-
sign never comes to maturity. The *much*
which it promises, is enough to render it
suspected: just so as the argument which
proves too much, proves nothing.

MAXIME CLXXVI.

To know, or to hearken to those who know.

There is no living without understand-
ing, it must be had, either by nature, or
at second hand. Yet there are some,
who are ignorant that they know no-
thing; and others, who think they know,
though they know nothing at all. The
faults that proceed from the want of wit,
are incurable. For as ignorants know
not themselves, so they take no care to
search for that they want. Some would
be wise, if they did think themselves
so. Hence it is that the Oracles of Wise-
dom be so rare, yet they have nothing to
doe, seeing no body consults them. It is
neither

neither a diminution of Grandeur, nor a sign of incapacity to take Counsel: on the contrary, one puts himself in the state of a knowing man by advising well. Debate with thy Reason, that thou mayst not be beaten by ill fortune.

MAXIME CLXXVII.

To avoid too much familiarity in Conversation.

It is neither pertinent to practise it, nor to suffer it. He that familiarizes himself, presently loses the Superiority that his serious air gave him, and by consequent his Credit. The stars retain their splendour, because they mingle not with us. By Divinizing, one gets Respect, by Humanizing, Contempt. The more common humane things are, the less they are esteemed. For communication discovers imperfections, that reservedness concealed. We must not be too familiar with any body;) not with Superiours, because of danger; nor with inferiours, by reason of Indecency: and far less with mean people whom ignorance renders insolent, inasmuch that being unsensible of the honour that is done them, they presume it is their due. Facility is a branch of a low mind.

MAXIME CLXXVIII.

*To believe the Heart, and especially if it
be a presaging Heart.*

It is never to be contradicted : for it is accustomed to prognosticate what most concern us. It is a Domestick Oracle. Many have perished, because they were too diffident of themselves. But to what end should one distrust himself, if he look not out for the remedy ? Some have a heart that tells them every thing : a certain mark of a rich stock. For that heart always prevents them, and rings the allarm Bell upon the approach of evils, to make them fly to the remedy. It is not the part of a wise man to go out and receive evils, but to be before-hand with them and disperse them.

MAXIME CLXXIX.

*To be reserved in speaking, is the Seal of
the Capacity.*

A Heart without secrecy is an open letter. Where there is depth, the secrets are deep. For there must be much room and large spaces, where all that is thrown
in

in may be easily kept. Reservation proceeds from the great command that one hath over himself, and that is, indeed, a real triumph. We pay tribute to as many as we discover our selves to. The security of Prudence consists in internal moderation. (The snares that are laid for discretion, are to contradict, to draw out, an explanation; and to glance biting words, to set one in a flame. Then it is that a Wise Man ought to keep the closer! Things that are to be done, are not to be told; nor are those that are fit to be told, good to be done.) *See the Maxime 279.*

MAXIME CLXXX.

Not to take the design of an Enemy for the rule of our Measures.

A Blockhead will never doe what a man of Wit thinks he should, because he is not able to discern what is to the purpose. And if he be a prudent man, less still; because he may go contrary to an advice that has been blow'd upon, and perhaps even prevented by his adversary. Matters ought to be examined on both sides, and prepared for *pro* and *con*: so that one may be ready for the *yea* and the *no*. Judgments are different. Indifference

166 *The Courtiers Manual Oracle, or,*
ought always to be attentive, not so much
for what shall happen, as for what may
happen.

MAXIME CLXXXI.

*Not to tell a lie, and yet not to speak all
the truth neither.*

Nothing requires more circumspection
than truth. (For to tell it, is to draw the
hearts blood. There needs as much skill
to know when to tell it, as to know when
to conceal it.) By on single lie, a man loses
all his good name. Deceit goes for false Coin,
and the Deceiver for a Coiner, which is
worse still. All truths cannot be told:
some, because they concern my self; and
others, because they concern a third person,

MAXIME CLXXXII.

*A grain of boldness is worth a pound weight
of skill.*

It is good not to conceive such a high
notion of people, as to become bashfull
in their presence. Let never the imagi-
nation debase the heart. Some appear to
be men of importance, till others treat
with them; but communication soon un-
deceives

deceives the Credulous. No body goes beyond the narrow bounds of man. Every one hath his *if*, some as to their Wit; and others as to their Genius. Dignity gives an apparent Authority; but it is rare, when the personal qualities answer it. For fortune is wont to clog the Superiority of the employment, by the inferiority of merits. Imagination is always upon the wing, and represents things greater than they are: It conceives not onely what there is, but what there may be also: Reason having been undeceived by so many experiences, ought to undeceive it. In a word, it neither becomes ignorance to be bold, nor capacity to be bashfull. And if Confidence be usefull to them who have but a small stock, upon stronger reason it ought to be usefull to those who have a great deal.

MAXIME CLXXXIII.

Not to be Head-strong.

All Fools are Opiniatours, and all Opiniatours are Fools. The more Erroneous their Opinions are, the more they hug them. It is civil to yield, even in those things wherein we have greatest reason and certainty: for then all know, who

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168 *The Courtiers Manual Oracle, or,*
had reason on their side : and besides the
reason, Gallantry is also discovered in the
procedure. There is more esteem lost, by a
wilfull resistance; then there is got by car-
rying it by open force. For that is not so
much a defending of truth, as a demonstrati-
on of Clownishness. There are knotty heads
very difficult to be cleft, and which al-
ways run upon some incurable extremity :
and when once whimsy joins to their
head-strongness, they contract an indissol-
uble league with extravagance. Inflexi-
bility ought to be in the will, and not in
the judgment : though there be excepted
cases too, wherein one is not to suffer
himself to be gained, nor doubly over-
come ; that's to say, both in the reason,
and in the execution.

MAXIME CLXXXIV.

Not to be Ceremonious.

The affectation of being so was here-
tofore censured as a piece of vitious sin-
gularity, and that in a King too. Punc-
tiliousness is tiresome. There are whole
Nations sick of that Nicety. The robe
of silliness is wrought with small stitch.
These Idolatours of the point of honour
give a demonstration, that their honour
is

is founded on a small matter, seeing they
fancie every thing may wound it. It is
good so to carry, as to gain Respect, but
it is ridiculous to pass for a great Master
of Compliments. It is very true, that a
Man without Ceremony hath need of a
great Merit in place of it. Courtesie
ought neither to be affected nor slighted.
He shall never gain the esteem of an able
man, who sticks too much upon Forma-
lities.

MAXIME CLXXXV.

*Never to expose ones Credit to the risque
of one single interview.*

For if one come not well off, it is an
irreparable loss. To fail once happens
often, and especially the first time. One
is not always in the kue; whence cometh
the Proverb: *It is not my day.* One
must therefore endeavour; that if he
hath failed the first time, the second may
make amends for all: or that the first may
vouch for the second, that succeeded not.
One ought always to have his recourse
to better, and to appeal from *much* to
more. Affairs depend on certain fortui-
tous cases, and on many too: and by con-
sequence good success is a rare good for-
tune.

MAX-

MAXIME CLXXXVI.

To discern faults, though they be in fashion.

Though Vice be cloathed in cloth of gold, yet a good man will still know it. It is to no purpose for it to be apparelled in gold, it can never so well disguise it self but that it will be perceived to be of iron. It would cloak it self with the nobility of its Adherents, but it is never stript of its baseness, nor the misery of its slavery. Vices may very well be exalted, but not exalt. Some observe, that such a Heroe hath had such a Vice, but they consider not, that it was not that Vice which made him a Heroe. The example of great men is so good an Oratour, that it persuades one to infamous matters. Sometimes flattery hath affected even bodily defects, without observing, that though they be born with in great men, they are insupportable in the mean.

MAXIME CLXXXVII.

To att all that is agreeable to ones self, and all that's odious by others.

The one conciliates good will, and the other

other banishes hatred. There is more pleasure in doing good, than in receiving it. It's in that, that generous Souls place their felicity. It seldome happens that one vexes another without being troubled himself, either through compassion or retaliation. Superiour causes never operate, without reaping praise or reward. Let the good come immediately from thee; and the evil by another. Take some body, upon whom the blows of discontent may fall, that's to say the hatred and the murmurings. The anger of the Rabble is like that of Dogs; not knowing the cause of its evil, it falls upon the Instrument. So that the instrument bears the punishment of the evil whereof it is not the principal cause.

MAXIME CLXXXVIII.

To bring always into company something to be praised.

That's a means to make one esteemed a man of good discerning, and upon whose judgment one may be assured of the goodness of things. He that hath known the perfection before, will be sure to esteem it afterwards. He furnishes matter to conversation
and

172 *The Courtiers Manual Oracle, or,*
and imitation, by unfolding plausible
knowledges. It is a politick way of
selling Courtesie to those that are pre-
sent, who have the same perfections.
Others on the contrary bring always with
them something to be blamed, and flatter
the present, by despising the absent. This
succeeds with them, when they are in the
company of those who onely look on the
outside: seeing such observe not the cun-
ning of speaking ill of some in presence
of others. Some think it a piece of Po-
licy to esteem more the ordinary perfec-
tions of to day, than the wonders of
yesterday. A Prudent Man then is to
have a care of all these Artifices, (where-
by these blades endeavour to attain to
their ends) that he may not be discoura-
ged by the exaggeration of the one, nor
puffed up by the flattery of the others.
Let him know, that both proceed the
same way with both parties, and onely
give them the alternative, by adjusting
their sentiments to the place where they
are.

MAXIME CLXXXIX.

To make use of the needs of others.

If privation come the length of desire,
it

it is the most efficacious constraint. Philosophers have said, that privation was nothing, and the Politicians say, that it's all in all. And without doubt these have best understood it. There are some who to obtain their ends, make their way by the desire of others. They lay hold of occasion, and stir up the desire by the difficulty of obtaining. They promise themselves more from the heat of passion, than from the lukewarmness of possession. Insomuch that the desire enflames the more as the resistance grows greater. The true secret of attaining to ones ends is, to keep people always in dependence.

MAXIME CXC.

To be satisfied in all conditions.

Even they who are useless, have the consolation that they are eternal. There is no trouble but hath its satisfaction. *Luck for the fools, and chance for the ugly,* saith the Proverb. To live long, there needs no more but to be of little worth. The crackt pot seldom breaks, it lasts commonly till people be weary of using it. It would seem that fortune envies men of importance, seeing it joins duration with incapacity in some, and short life

174 *The Courtiers Manual Oracle, or,*
life to much merit in others. All they
who by right ought to live, always fail
in good fortune : and such as are good for
nothing, you'll find to be eternal, whe-
ther because they appear to be so, or be-
cause in effect they are so. It seems that
destiny and death are agreed to forget the
unfortunate.

MAXIME CXCI.

Not to be gull'd with excessive Courtesie.

For it's a kind of Cheat. There are
some who stand not in need of the herbs
of *Theffaly* to bewitch with, for they
charm fools and vain people merely with
a low Bow. They make a Traffick of
Honour, and pay for it with the wind of
some fair words. He that promises all
promises nothing, and promises are so
many slippery steps for fools. True
Courtesie is a debt, that which is affected
and uncommon, is a Cheat. It is not a
civility, but a dependance. They make
not the Bow to the Person, but to the
Fortune. Their flattery is not an acknow-
ledgment of merit, but a bait to the pro-
fit, which they hope for. *See the Maxime*
118.

MAX-

MAXIME CXCI.

The peaceable man is the long lived man.

Live, and let live. Peacefull men not onely live but reign. We must hear and see, but withal, hold our peace. The day spent without contention, makes us spend the night in sleep. To live much, and to live with pleasure, is the life of two : and it is the fruit of internal peace. That man hath all, who does not at all care for what concerns him not. There is nothing more impertinent, than to lay to heart that which touches us not, or not to be affected with that which concerns us.

MAXIME CXCI.

Watch strictly over him that engages in thy interests, to come off with his own.

There is no better preservative against Cunning, than Caution. A word to the wise. Some doe their own business by seeming to doe another man's. So that if one have not the key of intentions, he is forced at every turn to burn his own fingers, to save other men's goods from the fire.

MAX-

MAXIME CXCV.

To have a modest Opinion of ones self, and of his affairs, especially when he does but begin the world.

All People have high Conceits of themselves, and especially they who signify least. Every one fancies to himself a brave Fortune, and imagines himself to be a Prodigy. Hope engages rashly, and then experience seconds it in nothing. Reality is the executioner of a vain imagination by undeceiving it. Prudence then ought to correct such extravagances: and (though it be allowable to desire the best, yet we ought always to expect the worst, that so we may take all that happens patiently.) It is dexterity to take ones aim a little higher, that he may hit the juster, but he ought not to shoot so high, as to fail at the first shot. That reformation of imagination is necessary, for vanity without experiences makes men onely to dote. A good understanding is the most universal remedy against all impertinences. Let every one know the sphere of his own activity, and condition. That will teach a man to square the opinion of himself according to reality.

MAX-

MAXIME CXCV.

To be able to judge.

There is no man but may be another's Master in some thing. He that exceeds, finds always some body that exceeds him. To know how to pick out the best of every thing, is a usefull knowledge. The Wise Man esteems all men, because he knows what's good in every one, and what things cost in doing of them well. The Fool despises all, in respect that he is ignorant of what is good, and always chuses the worst.

MAXIME CXCVI.

To know ones Planet.

There is no man so miserable, but that he hath his Planet: and if he be unfortunate, it is because he knoweth it not. Some have access to Princes, and great Men, and know neither how, nor why; unless it be that their luck hath made way for them. So that they need onely a little industry to preserve favour. There are others born as it were to please the Wise. One man hath been more accep-
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178 *The Courtiers Manual Oracle, or,*
table in one Countrey than another,
and better received in this City than in
that. One man happens also to be more
fortunate in one employment, than in all
others, though he be neither more nor
less capable of all. Destiny makes and
unmakes how and when it pleases. Eve-
ry one then ought to labour to know his
Destiny, and to try his *Minerva*; on
which depends all the loss and all the gain.
Let him know how to comply with his
fate, and take good heed he attempt not
to change it. For that would be to for-
sake the North-star in his course.

MAXIME CXCVII.

Never to be hampered with Fools.

It is a perplexity not to know them,
and much more for him that knows them
not to rid his hands of them. It is dan-
gerous to keep them Company, and per-
nicious to admit them to our Confidence.
For though their own timorousness, and
the Eye of another may for some time
keep them in awe, yet their extravagance
will break out at long-run, seeing they
have onely deferred the shewing of it,
that they might doe it with more solem-
nity. It is very difficult for him that can-
not

not keep his own Credit, to maintain another Man's. Besides, Fools are extremely unhappy. For misery is fastened to impertinence, as the skin to the bone. They have onely one thing that is not so very bad. And that is, that as the Wisdom of others signifies nothing to them, so on the contrary, they are very usefull to the Wise, whom they instruct and caution at their own proper cost.

MAXIME CXCVIII.

To know how to transplant ones self.

There are some, who, to set off their own value, are obliged to change Countries, especially if they aspire to great places. Ones Countrey is the Step-mother to eminent Qualities. Envy reigns there as in its Native Land. Men remember better the imperfections that one had in the beginning, than the merit, whereby he is advanced to grandeur. A Pin hath been esteemed a thing of value, when carried from one world into another: and sometimes a glass brought from a-far, hath made a Diamond to be undervalued. Every thing that is foreign, is esteemed, whether because it comes from a far Countrey; or because it is found to be complete,

180 *The Courtiers Manual Oracle, or,*
plete, and in its perfection. We have
seen men who have been the refuse of a
little Canton, and are now the honour of
the World, being equally revered by
their Countrey-men and Strangers; by
the one, because they are far off, and by
the others, because they are come from
a-far. He will never have great veneration
for a Statue, who hath seen it the
stump of a Tree in a Garden.

MAXIME CXCIX.

*To be a Wise Man, and not an intrieguing
Man.*

The shortest way to attain to Reputation, is the way of merit. If industry be founded on merit, it is the true way of obtaining it. Integrity alone is not sufficient; and the onely Intrieguer deserves it not: inasmuch that matters are then so defective, that they infect the Reputation. It is then requisite both to have merit, and to know how to bring ones self into play.

MAX-

MAXIME CC.

*To have always something still to desire,
that one may not be unhappy in his
happiness.*

The body breaths, and the mind aspires. If one enjoyed all things, he would be disgusted with every thing. Nay, it is even necessary for the satisfaction of the understanding, that there remain always something to be known, for feeding Curiosity. Hope gives life, and the glut of pleasure makes the life a burthen. In matter of reward, it is prudent not to give it all at once. When there is no more to be desired, every thing is to be feared: and that is an unhappy felicity. Fear beginneth where desire endeth.

MAXIME CCI.

*All who appear Fools, are so, and one half
also of those who appear not to be.*

Folly hath taken possession of this World, and if there be the least wisdom in it, it is more folly in respect of the wisdom from above. But the greatest Fool is he that thinks himself wise, and

182 *The Courtiers Manual Oracle, or,*
accuses all others of folly. To be wise,
it is not sufficient to seem so, and far less
to seem so to ones self. He is so, that
thinks not himself to be so: and he who
perceives not, that others see, sees not
himself. Though the world be so full of
Fools and Blockheads, yet no body be-
lieves himself to be one, nor so much
as suspects it.

MAXIME CCII.

*Sayings and Actions render a Man accom-
plished.*

We must speak well, and act well. The
one shews a good head, and the other a
good heart: and both spring from a supe-
riority of mind. (Words are the shadow
of actions. *Saying* is the *Female*, and
doing the *Male*. It is better to be the sub-
ject of a Panegyrick, than the Panegyrist.
It is better to receive praises, than to give
them. To *say* is easie; but to *doe*, diffi-
cult. Brave actions are the substance of
life, and good sayings the ornament of it.
The excellence of actions is permanent,
that of words transient.) Actions are the
fruit of reflexions. Some are wise, others
valiant.

MAX.

MAXIME CCIII.

To know the Excellencies of ones Age.

They are not very numerous. There is but one Phœnix in the world. Hardly is there to be found in an age a great General, a perfect Oratour, a Sage. And an excellent King is to be lookt for in many ages. Mediocrities are common, both for number, and for esteem : but Excellencies are every way rare, because they require an accomplished perfection : and the higher the form, the harder it is to get to be Captain of it. Many have usurped the Sirname of *Great* from *Cæsar* and *Alexander*, but all in vain. For without the actions, the voice of the people is but a little air. There have been but few *Seneca's*, and Fame hath colebrated but one *Apelles*.

MAXIME CCIV.

What is easie ought to be set about, as if it were difficult ; and what is difficult as if it were easie.

The one for fear of slackening through too much confidence; and the other for

184 *The Courtiers Manual Oracle, or,*
fear of losing courage through too much
apprehensiveness. The way to fail in
doing of a thing, is to reckon it already
done: on the contrary, diligence sur-
mounts impossibility. As to great enter-
prizes, we must not stand reasoning, it is
enough that we embrace them when
they present, lest the consideration of
their difficulty make us abandon the at-
tempt.

MAXIME CCV.

To know how to make use of Contempt.

The true secret for obtaining the
things which one desires, is to undervalue
them. Commonly they are not to be
found when they are sought: whereas
they offer themselves, when one cares not
for them. As the things of this World
are the shadow of those in Heaven, so
have they that property of a shadow,
that they fly from him that follows them,
and pursue him who flies from them.
Contempt also is the most politick re-
venge. It's the general Maxime of the
wise, never to defend themselves with
the Pen, because it leaves tracts, that turn
more to the glory of their Enemies, than
to their humiliation. Besides that, that
kind

kind of defence gives more honour to envy, than mortification to insolence. It's cunning in inconsiderable persons to vie with great men, that they may get themselves Credit by an indirect way, when they cannot have it by right. (Many men had never been known, if excellent Adversaries had not taken notice of them.) There is no higher revenge, than Oblivion. For it is the burying of these men under the dust of their own nullity. Rash blades imagine to purchase to themselves an eternal fame, by setting fire to the Wonders of the world, and ages. The art of repressing Calumny, is, not to mind it. To answer it, is, to doe prejudice to ones self. To be offended thereat, is, to discredit ones self, and to give envy ground of satisfaction. For there needs no more but that shadow of defect, if not for obscuring a perfect beauty entirely, at least for depriving it of its liveliest lustre.

MAXIME CCVI.

We must know that the vulgar humour is every where.

Even at *Corinth*, and in the most accomplished Family. Every one hath the
ex-

186 *The Courtiers Manual Oracle, or,*
experience of it in his own house. There
is not onely a vulgar, but a doubly vul-
gar humour, which is worse. This
hath the same properties with the Rabble,
just so as the pieces of a broken Looking-
glass have all the same transparency : but
it is far more dangerous. It speaks foo-
lishly, and censures impertinently. It is
the great Disciple of ignorance, the God-
father of silliness, and the near Cousin of
quacking. (We must not mind what it
says, and far less what it thinks.) It is
convenient to know it, that we may get
rid of it, so that we be neither it's com-
panion nor object. For all silliness is of
the nature of the Rabble, and the vulgar
is onely made up of Fools.

MAXIME CCVII.

To use Retention.

We ought to mind what we doe, espe-
cially on unexpected occasions. The
eruptions of Passions are so many slippe-
ry places that make Prudence to slide.
There lies the danger of being undone.
A man engages farther in a minute of
rage or pleasure, than in many hours of
indifference. Sometimes a little pelting
fret costs a repentance, that lasts as long
as

as life. Other men's Malice lays ambushes for Prudence, that it may discover footing. It makes use of that kind of rack, for extorting the most hidden secret of the heart. Retention then must raise the counter-battery, and particularly on hot occasions. There needeth much reflexion to keep a Passion in order. He is a wise man that leads it by the Bridle. Who knows there is danger, counts his steps. A word seems as offensive to him that catches at it, and weighs it, as it appears of little consequence to him that spake it.

MAXIME CCVIII.

Not to die the death of a Fool.

Wise Men die commonly poor in Wisdom: on the contrary, Fools die rich in Council. To die like a Fool, is to die of too much Logick. Some die, because they feel, and others live because they feel not. So that the one are Fools, because they die not of feeling, and the others because they die of it. That man is a fool, who dies of too much understanding. So that some die to be *Understanding Men*, and other's live, not to be *understood*. But though many die like Fools, yet very few Fools die.

MAX-

MAXIME CCIX.

Not to imitate the folly of others.

Is an effect of rare wisdom; for whatever is introduced by example and custome, is of great force. Some who have guarded against particular ignorance, have not been able to avoid the general. It's a common saying, that no man is content with his own condition, though it be the best: nor dissatisfied with his wit, though it be the worst. Every one envies the happiness of another, because he is not content with his own. Modern men praise ancient things, and those that are here, things that are there. All that's past seems best, and all that's remote is most esteemed. He is as great a Fool that laughs at all things, as he that vexes at every thing.

MAXIME CCX.

To know how to make use of truth.

Truth is dangerous, but yet a good man cannot forbear to speak it. And in that there is need of art. The skilfull Physicians of the Soul have essayed all means

means to sweeten it. For when it touches to the quick, it is the quintessence of bitterness. Discretion in that particular unfolds all its address: with the same truth it flatters one, and kills another. We ought to speak to those that are present, under the name of the absent or dead. To the understanding, a sign is enough: and if that be not sufficient, the best expedient is to hold ones peace. Princes are not cured by bitter Medicines. It requires art to guild their Pill.

In the third Critick of the third part of the Authours *Criticon*, he saith, That after many consultations about the means of recalling Truth into the world, from whence men had banished it, to put falsehood in its place, it was resolved to make it up in a great quantity of Sugar, for qualifying the bitterness of it, and then to doe it over with the Powder of Amber, to take from it its strong and unpleasant smell. After that it should be given to men to drink in a Golden Cup, and not in a Glass, least it might be seen through it: telling them that it was an excellent liquour, brought from a-far, and more precious than Chocolate, Coffee or Sarbet. *Then he adds.* They began with Princes, to the end that in imitation of them all men might drink of it. But
seeing

seeing they have a very delicate smelling, they smelt the bitterness of that drink at a Leagues distance, which began to turn their stomach, and force them to vomit, &c. And in his *Discreet*, in the Dialogue entituled, *El Buen entendedor*, he brings in a Doctour, saying; to speak truth now a-days, is called brutishness and folly. And he makes answer. And therefore no body will speak it to those who are not accustomed to hear it. There remain onely now some scraps of it in the world, nor do these neither appear, but with mystery, ceremony, and circumspection. With Princes, (replies the Doctour) men always fetch a compass. It concerns them then to take good heed to that, (answers *Gracian*) inasmuch as the losing or gaining of all lies thereby at stake. (Verity, adds the Doctour, is a Maid no less modest than beautifull : and that's the reason why she goes always veiled. But Princes then, (replied *Gracian*,) ought gallantly to uncover her.) It concerns them much to be good Diviners, and sharp-sighted *Linxes*, that they may dive in truth, and discern falshood. The more every one studies to mutter onely the truth to them between their teeth, the more they give it them ready chewed, and easie to be digested, to the end it
may

may doe them the more good. At present *undeception* is politick; it goes commonly betwixt two lights, either that it may get out of the darkness of flattery, if it meet a Fop; or that it may advance to the light of truth, if it meet with a Man of wit.

MAXIME CCXI.

In Heaven all is pleasure; in Hell all pain. The world being in the middle, has a share of both.

We are betwixt two extremes, and so we participate of both. There is an alternative of destiny, neither can all be happiness, nor all unhappiness. This world is a cypher, all alone it is of no value, joined to Heaven it is worth a great deal. It is wisdom to be indifferent as to all its changes, for Novelty moves not the wise. Our life is acted like a Play. The Catastrophy is in the last Act. The chief part then is, to end it well.

MAXIME CCXII.

Not to discover the mystery of ones Art.

Great Masters use this Cunning, even
when

192 *The Courtiers Manual Oracle, or,*
when they teach their Trade. One must
always preserve a Superiority, and con-
tinue to be Master. There is need of Art
in communicating ones Art, the source of
teaching, and that of giving must never
be drained. That's the means of preserv-
ing Reputation and Authority. To
have always somewhat that may feed ad-
miration, by advancing things still to
greater perfection, is a great precept to be
observed in the matter of pleasing and
teaching. In all sorts of Professions, and
particularly in the most sublime employ-
ments, not to be lavish of ones self, hath
been a great rule for living and prevailing.

MAXIME CCXIII.

To know how to contradict.

It is an excellent stratagem, when one can
doe it, not to be engaged, but to engage. It
is the onely Rack that can extort Passions.
Slowness in believing is a Vomitive that
brings up secrets, and a Key that can open
the best lockt heart. To sound both the
will and judgment, requires great dex-
terity. A lye contempt of some myste-
rious words of another's, hunts out the
most impenetrable secrets, and pleasantly
wheadies them to the point of the Tongue,
that

that they may so be caught in the toils of artifice.) The reservedness of him who stands upon his guard, makes his spy draw off to a distance: and so he discovers the thought of another, which otherwise was impenetrable. (An affected Doubt is a false Key of a cunning contrivance, whereby Curiosity unlocks all that it hath a mind to know.) In matter of learning it is a cunning fetch in the Schollar to contradict his Master, inasmuch as it lays an obligation upon him, to labour to explain the truth with greater perspicuity and solidity.) So that moderate contradiction gives him that teaches occasion to teach thoroughly.

MAXIME CCXIV.

Of one Folly not to make two.

Nothing more ordinary than after one hath committed one piece of foppery, to doe three or four more in making amends for it. One impertinence is excused by another greater. Foppishness is of the race of Lying, or this of the race of that: to make good one, there is need of a great many others. The defence of a bad Cause, hath always been worse than the Cause it self. Not to know how to

O

cover

194 *The Courtiers Manual Oracle, or,*
cover the evil, is a greater evil than the
evil it self. The revenue of imperfections
is, to let out a great many others to
Rent. The wisest man may very well
fail once, but not twice; transiently, and
by inadvertency, but not deliberately.
See the Maxime 261.

MAXIME CCXV.

*To have an eye over him that looks one
way, and rows another.*

It's the stratagem of a man of business
to amuse the will that he may attack it.
For so soon as it is convinced it is over-
come. He dissembles his intention, that
he may attain to it: he puts himself in
the second rank, that he may be the first
in execution. He makes sure of his
blow through the inadvertency of his
Adversary. Let not then thy atten-
tion sleep, since the intention of thine
adversary is so vigilant. And if the inten-
tion be the second in dissimulation, the dis-
cerning ought to be the first in knowledge.
It is an act of circumspection to find out
the artifice that one makes use of, and to
observe the aims he takes for hitting the
ends of his intentions. Seeing he propo-
ses one thing, and pretends another, and
that

that he turns and winds, that he may slyly reach his ends, we are to look well about us what we grant to such an one ; and sometimes it will not even be amiss to let him know that we have discovered his designs.

MAXIME CCXVI.

To speak clearly.

That shews not onely a disengagedness, but also a vivacity of wit. Some conceive well, and bring forth ill. For without light the Children of the Soul, that's to say, thoughts and expressions, cannot come into the World. There are some, much like to those pots, which hold much, and let little out : On the contrary, others say more than they know. What resolution is in the will, expression is in the understanding. They are too great perfections.) Clear Wits are plausible ; confused heads have been admired, because not understood. Sometime obscurity is gracefull, to distinguish one from the Rabble. But how can others judge of what they hear, if those who speak, conceive not themselves what they say ?

MAXIME CCXVII.

We must neither love, nor hate for ever.

Live to day with thy Friends, as with those who to morrow may be thy worst Enemies.) Seeing that is found by experience, it is very reasonable to be upon ones guard. Have a care not to give Arms to the deserters of Friendship, inasmuch as they'll fight with them more cruelly against thy self. On the contrary, in regard of thine Enemies, leave always a door open to reconciliation, to wit, that of Gallantry, which is the surest. Sometimes former revenge hath been the cause of future repentance, and the pleasure of doing evil, turns into the displeasure of having done it.

MAXIME CCXVIII.

To doe nothing whimsically, but every thing with circumspection.

Every whimsey is an imposthume. It is the eldest son of passion, that does all things the backward way. There are some who turn every thing into a kind of skirmishing. They are Russians in Con-

Conversation; and would make a triumph of every thing they doe. They know not what it is to be peacefull. In commanding and governing they are pernicious, because they turn Government into a league offensive, and form a party of Enemies of those whom they ought to look upon as Children. They'll have all things go in their way, and carry every thing as the result of their Conduct. But so soon as men discover their paradoxical humour, they stand upon their guard against them; their *Chimera's* are slung back to them again: and by consequent they are so far from gaining their point, that they heap up to themselves vexations, every one lending a hand to their mortification. These silly people have a crackt brain, and sometimes also an unsound heart. The way to get rid of such Monsters, is to flie to the Antipodes, the barbarity whereof will be more supportable than the fierce and haughty humour of these men.

MAXIME CCXIX.

Not to pass for a Crafty Man.

The truth is, there is no living now a-days without using it. But it is better to

198 *The Courtiers Manual Oracle, or,*
chuse to be prudent than cunning. An
open humour is agreeable to all men, but
a great many love not to have it. Sin-
cerity ought not to degenerate into sim-
plicity, nor Wisdom into Artifice. Bet-
ter it is to be respected as Wise, than fea-
red as Crafty. Sincere People are loved,
but deceived. It is the greatest cunning
to hide that which passes for cheating.
Candour flourished in the golden Age,
Malice has its turn in this age of Iron.
The reputation of knowing what one
hath to doe, is honourable, and procures
confidence; but that of being artifizious,
is sophistical, and begets distrust.

MAXIME CCXX.

*To cover our selves with the Foxe's skin,
when we cannot doe it with the Lyon's.*

[To yield to the times, is to exceed. He
that compasses his design, never loses his
Reputation.] Art ought to supply strength.
If we cannot proceed in the King's high-
way of open force, we must take the by-
path of Artifice. Wiles are far more ex-
peditious than strength. The wise have
oftener got the better of the brave, than
the brave of the wise.) When an enter-
prize fails, the dcor is open to contempt.

MAX-

MAXIME CCXXI.

Not to be too ready to engage, nor to engage another.

There are some men cut out for blundering, and making others stumble against decency. They are always at the point of doing some foppery. They are very apt to jostle rudely, but they unhappily break to pieces. They don't come off for an hundred quarrels a day. Their humour being cross-grained, they contradict all men in all things. Having their judgment set the wrong way, they disapprove every thing. It belongs onely to these great free-booters of prudence to doe nothing right, and to censure every thing as wrong. What Monsters are there in the large Countrey of impertinence!

MAXIME CCXXII.

A reserved man is apparently a prudent man.

The Tongue is a wild Beast, very hard to be chained again, when once it is let loose. It is the pulse, whereby the wise

O 4

know,

300 *The Courtiers Manual Oracle, or,*
know the disposition of the Soul. By
that, intelligent men feel the motion of
the heart. The mischief is, that he who
ought to be the most discreet, is the least.
The wise man avoids fretting and enga-
ging, and thereby shews how much he is
master of himself. He acts with circum-
spection. He is a *Jannus* in counterpoi-
sing, and an *Argus* in discerning. *Mo-
mus* might have said with better reason,
that the hands wanted eyes, than that the
heart needed a little window.

MAXIME CCXXIII.

*Not to be too singular, neither through af-
fection, nor inadvertency.*

Some make themselves remarkable by
their singularity, that's to say, by foolish
actions, which are rather faults than diffe-
rences: and as some are known to all
men, by some deformity in the face; so
are these by I know not what excess, that
appears in their countenance. To be sin-
gular is good for nothing, unless it be to
make one pass for an original imperti-
nent: which alternately provokes the
scorn of some, and the bad humour of
others.

*This Maxime being taken out of the Chap-
ter*

ter of the Authour's Discreet, entituled, La Figureria, I have thought it pertinent to insert an extract of it here as a Commentary.

There are, says he, many people, that serve as an object to be laughed at by others, and those are purposely so, who to distinguish themselves from other men, affect an extravagant singularity, which they observe in all their actions. You shall see a man that would give any thing he could speak from his poll, that he might not speak by the mouth, as others doe. But since that's impossible, they transform their voice, affect a little accent, invent idiomes, and lisp it sweetingly, that they may be rare in every thing. They torture their palate, in depriving it of all that naturally it loves. Seeing it is common to them with the rest of Mankind and other Animals, they would change it by an excess of singularity, which is rather the punishment of their affectation, than the elevation of their grandeur. Sometimes they'll be pleased to drink dregs, and say it's Nectar. They leave the generous King of Liquours for Waters, which are onely pretious in their fancies; they smell of Physick, and they call them *Ambrosia*. Every day they invent Novelties, that they may always improve in singularity; and the truth is,
they

202 *The Courtiers Manual Oracle, or,*
they succeed in it, since no body else finds
either the goodness or relish in the Ra-
goes, which they so magnify. So that
they remain all alone in their extrava-
gancy, or as others call it, impertinence.
And some, lives after. In Heroick acti-
ons, singularity is becoming, and no-
thing gains more veneration to great em-
ployments. Grandeur consists in the
sublimity of wit, and in elevated thoughts.
There is no nobility like to that of the
Heart. For it never stops to Artifice.
Virtue is the Character of Heroism. Dis-
ference is becoming there: Princes ought
to live with so great lustre and splen-
dour, by means of their good qualities,
and virtues, that, if the Stars descended
from their Celestial Sphere, to come and
dwell with us, they should not be more
luminous than they. There are others
who are not men; they affect to distin-
guish themselves by modes, and to sin-
gularize themselves by an extraordinary
air. They abhor all that is in practice.
They shew an antipathy against custome.
They affect Antiquity, and to revive old
fashions. Others in *Spain* wear the
French habit, and in *France* the Spanish.
Nay, there are some that go into the
Countrey with a Gorget, and to court
with a Band, playing to the Puppits, as
if

if Derision needed a Ragoë. Men ought never to give occasion of laughter to People of sense; nay, not so much as to Children; and nevertheless there are a great many who seem to place their whole study and care in making themselves ridiculous, and to be talked of by others. They'd think the day ill spent, if they signalized it not by some ridiculous singularity. But how could the mirth of some be entertained without the extravagance of others? Some Vices serve as matter for others. And thus Foppishness is the food of Calumny. But if frivolous singularity in the bark, that's to say, in the outside, be a subject of laughter, what will the internal, I mean, that of the mind be? There are some men, in whom, one would say, that Nature had placed all things, Wit, Judgment and all, the wrong way. They affect to appear so, for fear of conforming to Custome. Unintelligible in their Reasoning, depraved in their Opinion, and irregular in all. For the greatest singularity, without doubt, is that of the Understanding. Others cloath their capriciousness with a vain Pride, lined with foppishness and folly. With that they affect in all things and all places, a starched gravity. They would seem to doe
honour

264 *The Courtiers Manual Oracle, or,*
honour with a look, and favour with a
word of their mouth.

MAXIME CCXXIV.

*Never to take things against the hair,
though they come that way.*

Every thing hath a right side and a wrong. The best thing hurts, if we take it the wrong way. On the contrary the most unfitting fits, if it be taken by the handle. Many things have given trouble that would have been pleasant, if one had known the good of them. In all things there is good and bad. The skill lies in knowing how to find out the good. One and the same thing, hath its good day, and its bad. Examine it on the fairest side. We must not give the contrary reines to good and evil. Hence it is that some take pleasure in all things, and others in nothing. A good expedient against the reverse of fortune, and for living in any time, and in any employment that happens to men.

MAX-

MAXIME CCXXV.

To know ones prevailing fault.

Every one hath one, that makes a counterpoise to his predominant perfection. And if it be backt by inclination, it rules like a Tyrant. Let one begin to make War against it then, by declaring it: and let that be by a *manifesto*. For if it be known, it will be overcome; and especially if he that hath it, judge it to be as great, as it appears to others. To be master of ones self, there is need of reflecting upon ones self. If once that root of imperfections be pluckt out, we'll soon be able to master the rest.

MAXIME CCXXVI.

Attention to engage.

Most part of men neither speak nor act according to what themselves are, but according to the impression of others. There is no body, but is more than sufficient for persuading evil, because evil is most easily believed, even sometimes when it is incredible. The best thing we can pretend to, depends on the fancy
of

206 *The Courtiers Manual Oracle, or,*
of others. Some are satisfied to have
reason on their side : but that is not e-
nough, and by consequent, it needs to be
pursued. Sometime the care of engaging
costs but very little, and is worth a great
deal. With words we purchase good
deeds. In this great Inn of the World,
there is no utensil so small, but that it
may happen to be usefull once in a year :
and, for all it is of so little worth, it will
be very inconvenient to be without it.
Every one speaks of the object according
to his passion.

MAXIME CCXXVII.

Not to be a man of the first impression.

Some espouse the first information, so
that all others are but Concubines. And
as falshood goes always first, so truth
finds no place after. Neither the mind,
nor the will, ought ever to be filled nei-
ther with the first proposition, nor the
first object : which is the sign of a poor
stock. Some resemble a new pot that
retains always the smell of the first liquour
good or bad, that hath been put into it.
When that weakness comes to be known
it is pernicious, because it gives advantage
to the artifices of malice. They who
have

have bad intentions, hasten to give their tincture to credulity. A void space must be left then for revision. Let *Alexander* keep the other ear for the adverse party. Let a door be open for a second and third information. It's a sign of incapacity to stick to the first, nay, and a fault that borders upon head-strongness.

MAXIME CCXXVIII.

To have neither the report, nor reputation of being a bad Tongue.

For that's to be reckoned a general scourge. Be not ingenious at the cost of another: which is more odious than painful. All men revenge themselves of an evil Speaker, by speaking evil of him: and seeing he is alone, he'll be sooner overcome than the others, who are numerous, can be convicted. Evil ought never to be the subject of contentment nor commentary. A detractor is eternally hated, and if sometimes great men converse with him, it is more out of pleasure to hear his Satyres, than for any esteem they have of him. He that speaks ill, causes always more to be said of himself.

MAX-

MAXIME CCXXIX.

*To know how to divide ones life, like a man
of Parts.*

Not according as occasions present, but by foresight and choice. A life that hath no intermission, is painfull, like a long way, where there is no Inn. Variety well understood makes it happy. The first period ought to be spent in speaking with the dead. We are born to know, and to know our selves: and it is by Books that we truly learn that, and become complete men. The second station is to be allotted for the living, that's to say, that we ought to see what is best in the World, and keep a register of it. [All is not to be found in one place. The universal Father hath distributed his gifts, and sometimes it hath pleased him to give a largess to the most miserable Countrey. The third pause ought to be all for our selves.] The chief happiness is to Philosophize.

This Maxime is taken out of the last Chapter of his Discreet, an abstract whereof it is fit to subjoin as a Commentary to it.

The Wise Man, says he, measures his life, as one that hath little and much to live.

live. A life without rests is a long way without Inns. Nature hath proportioned the life of man according to the course of the Sun ; and the four ages of life according to the four seasons of the year. The Spring of man begins in his Infancy. The flowers of it are tender, and the hopes frail. It is followed by the hot and excessive Summer of Youth, every way dangerous, because of the boyling bloud, and the frequent eruptions of passions. The Autumn of Manly Age comes next, crowned with the ripe fruits of mind and will : and then at length the Winter of old Age, wherein the leaves of vigour fall ; when the rivulets of the veins freeze ; Snow covers the Head, when the Hair and Teeth are gone ; and when life trembles at the approaches of death. *And a page after.* It was a piece of celebrated wit in that gallant Person, who divided the Comedy into three days, and the voyage of life into three stations. The first he employed in speaking with the dead ; the second in conversing with the living ; and the third in entertaining ones self. Let us explain the riddle. I say, he gave the first term of life to Books. He read them, and that was rather a pleasure than a toil. For if one be the more a man, the more

he knows, the noblest employment will be to learn. He devoured Books, which are the food of the Soul, and the delights of the mind. It's great happiness to meet with the best on every subject. He learn't the two universal Languages, Latine and Spanish, which are now a-days the Keys of the World; and the five particular, to wit, the Greek, the Italian, the French, the English, and the Dutch; that he might make his profit of all the good that is celebrated in them. After that, he bequeathed himself to that Grand-mother of life, the Wife of the Mind, and the Daughter of Experience, plausible History, I mean that which delights and instructs most. He began with the Ancients, and ended with the Modern, though others take the contrary course, chusing his Authours, and distinguishing the Times, the Dates, Centuries, and Ages; searching into the causes of the growth, fall, and revolution of Monarchies, and Re-publicks; the number, order, and qualities of their Princes, their Actions in Peace and War. He walked in the delicious Gardens of Poetry, not so much to exercise himself as to play there. Yet he was not so ignorant, but that he knew how to make a verse; nor so unadvised, as to make two. Amongst
all

all the Poets he gave his heart to sententious *Horace*, and his hand to subtle *Martial*: which was to give him the Laurel. To Poésie he joined savoury Humanity. Then he proceeded to Philosophy, and beginning with Natural, he acquired the structure of the Universe, of the marvellous being of Man, of the properties of Animals, and Plants, and in fine, of the qualities of pretious Stones. But he took more pleasure in Moral Philosophy, which is the food of real men, as that which gives life to Prudence: and he studied it in the Books of the Wise and Philosophers, who have compiled it to us in Sentences, Apophthegms, Emblems and Apologues. He knew both Cosmographies, the material and formal, measuring the Earth and the Sea; distinguishing the Elevations and Climates, the four parts of the world, and in them, Provinces and Nations: that he might not be one of those Ignorants and half-Beasts, who have never known what it is they tread upon. Of Astrology he knew as much as Wisdom suffers to be known, &c. In fine, he crowned his Studies by a long and serious application to the reading of Holy Scriptures, which is the most usefull, universal and pleasant study for men of judgment. So that Moral

212 *The Courtiers Manual Oracle, or,*
Philosophy rendred him Prudent ; Na-
tural, Knowing ; History, Discreet ; Poe-
try, Ingenious ; Rhetorick, Eloquent ;
Humanity, Polite ; Cosmography, Intel-
ligent ; and the study of Holy Scripture,
Pious and Devote.

He employed the second part of his
life in Travelling, which is the second
happines of a man that's curious, and ca-
pable of making good use of it. He
sought and found all that was best in the
world. For when we see not things, we
enjoy them not fully. There is a great
deal to be said betwixt what one imagines,
and what he sees. He takes more plea-
sure in objects who sees them but once,
than he that sees them often. The first
time one is contented, at all others he is
tired. The first day, a pretty thing is
the pleasure of him who is the master of
it ; but after that, it affects him no more
than that of a stranger. He saw the
Courts of greatest Princes, and by con-
sequent the Prodigies of Nature and Art
in Picture, Sculpture, Tapestry, Jewels,
&c. He conversed with the excellentest
men of the World, either in learning, or
any thing else, whereby he had the means
of observing, censuring, confronting, and
putting the just value upon all things.

He spent the third part of so fine a
life

life in meditating upon the *much* which he had read ; and the *more* which he had seen. All that enters by the door of the senses into this Haven of the Soul, is unloaded at the Custom-house of the mind, where every thing is Registred. There it is that things are weighed, judged, examined, and the quintessences of truths drawn. . Ripe age is designed for contemplation. For the more strength the Body loses, the more the Soul acquires. The balance of the superiour part rises as much, as that of the inferiour falls. At that time men judge of things in a far different manner. Maturity of age seasons Reason, and tempers the Passions. From seeing, one becomes intelligent ; from contemplating wise. The Crown of a Prudent Man is to be a Philosopher, by drawing from all things, in imitation of the laborious Bee, either the honey of pleasant profit, or the wax that may serve to make a Torch to undeceive him. Philosophy is nothing else but a meditation on death. It is good to think on it many times before, that one may succeed in it at the last.

MAXIME CCXXX.

To open ones Eyes when it is time.

All who see, have not their Eyes open; nor do all that look see. To reflect too late, is not a remedy, but a vexation. Some begin to see when there is no more to be seen. They have undone their houses, and squandered away their fortunes, before they made any thing of themselves. It's hard to give understanding to him that has no mind to have it; and harder still to give the will to him that has no understanding. They who are about them, play with them, as with blind men, and they are a diversion for all the company. And seeing they are deaf to hear, they never open their Eyes to see. Nevertheless there are some who foment that insensibility, because their well-being consists in procuring others to be nothing. Unhappy the Horse, whose Master has no Eyes! He will hardly ever be fat.

MAX-

MAXIME CCXXXI.

Never to shew things before they be finished.

All beginnings are defective, and the imagination is always prejudiced. The remembring to have seen a thing imperfect, takes from one the liberty of thinking it pretty when it is finished. To have a full view at once of a great object, is a hindrance to judge of every part of it; but it is also a pleasure that fills the whole imagination. A thing is nothing, till it be all: and when a thing begins to be, it is farther from being any thing. To see the most exquisite Dishes drest, provokes more disgust than Appetite. Let every skilfull Master then, have a care not to let his works be seen in *embrio*. Let him learn of Nature not to expose them, till they be in a condition of appearing.

MAXIME CCXXXII:

To understand the Commerce of life a little.

All must not be Theory, let there be some Practice also. The wisest are easily deceived. For though they understand the extraordinary, yet they are ignorant

216 *The Courtiers Manual Oracle, or,*
of the ordinary way of living; which is
the most necessary. The contemplation
of high things, suffers them not to think
of those which are common: and seeing
they are ignorant of what they ought
first to know, that's to say, of what eve-
ry one doth, they are lookt upon with
wonder, or esteemed ignorant by the vul-
gar, who consider onely the surface. Let
a wise man then take care to know as
much of the Commerce of life, as may
serve to keep him from being the sop, or
laughing stock of others. Let him be a
man of management. For though that
be not the highest point of life, it is ne-
vertheless the most usefull. What is
knowledge good for, if it be not put into
practice? To know how to live, is now
a-days the true knowledge.

MAXIME CCXXXIII.

To find out the palate of others.

Else you'll displease, instead of plea-
sing. Some for want of understanding
the tempers of people, vex when they
thought to oblige. There are actions
that are flattery for some, and an offence
for others: and many times that which
was believed to be a good Office, hath
proved

proved a disservice. It hath sometimes cost more to doe a displeasure, than to doe a pleasure. How can we please other men, if we know not their humour? Hence it is that some have censured, thinking they praised: a punishment which they well deserved. Others think to divert by their Eloquence, and cloy the mind by their babling.

MAXIME CCXXXIV.

Never to engage ones Reputation without good assurances of the honour and integrity of others.

To follow the way of silence, is the way to profit: but to lose, facility will doe the work. As to the concerns of Honour, it is good always to make one in company: so that ones own Reputation be obliged to take care of the Reputation of another. One must never be surety: but if that sometimes happen, let it be done so discreetly, that Prudence may yield to Circumspection. Let the risque be common, and the Cause reciprocal, to the end that he who is the Accomplice, may not set up for an Evidence.

MAX-

MAXIME CCXXXV.

To know how to ask.

There is nothing easier for some, nor more difficult for others. Some there are, who cannot refuse, and by consequent there's no need of a hook to draw from them what one would have. There are others again, whose first word is always *no* : with those there is need of cunning. But of whomsoever we have any thing to ask, we ought to nick our time ; as, for instance, at the conclusion of a good Meal, or of some other refreshment, that hath put them in a good humour : in case the Prudence of him that is address'd to, prevent not the Artifice of him who desires. Days of rejoycing are the days of favour, because the joy within spreads it self abroad. We are not to present our selves, when we see another denied, seeing then the fear of saying *no*, is surmounted. When there is melancholly within doors, nothing is to be done. To oblige before hand, is a bill of Exchange, when the Correspondent is a civil man.

MAX-

MAXIME CCXXXVI.

To make that a favour, which would have been afterwards but a reward.

That's the art of greatest Politicians. Favours, which go before Merits, are the touch-stone of Gentlemen. An anticipated favour hath two perfections: one is, the promptitude, which obliges the receiver to greater gratitude: and the other, because the same gift, which coming later would be a debt, by anticipation is a pure favour. A cunning way of transforming obligations, since he, who would have deserved to be rewarded, is obliged to a thankfull acknowledgment. I speak of men of honour. For, as to others, it would rather be a curb than a spur, to give them an honorary before hand.

MAXIME CCXXXVII.

Never to be privy to the secrets of Superiours.

You may think to share in the Plums, but it is onely in the Stones. To have been confidants, hath been the undoing
of

of many. It is with confidents, as with the crust of bread, that is used instead of a spoon, which runs the risque of being swallowed down with the broth. Confidence is not the favour, but the impost of the Prince. Many break their Looking-glass, because it shews them their ugliness. A Prince cannot abide to see the man, who may have seen him: and the witness of an ill act, is always ill lookt upon. One ought never to be too much obliged to any body, and far less to great men. Services rendred, stand better with them than favours received. But above all things, the confidences of Friendship are dangerous. He that hath entrusted his secret to another, hath made himself his slave: and in Sovereigns, it is a violence that cannot last long. For they are impatient to redeem their lost liberty: and for succeeding in that, they'll overturn every thing, nay, and reason it self. It's a Maxime for secrets, *Neither to hear them, nor tell them.*

MAXIME CCXXXVIII.

To know the piece that we want.

Several men would be great, if they wanted not a *somewhat*, without which
they

they never attain to the height of perfection. It's to be observed in some, that they might be worth much, if they would supply a little defect. To some, seriousness is wanting, for fault of which great qualities have no lustre in them. To others, sweetness of carriage: a defect, which those that frequent their company, soon discover, and especially in dignified persons. In some more briskness is desired; and in others more reservedness. It were easie to supply all these defects, if one minded them. For reflexion may turn Custome into a second Nature.

MAXIME CCXXXIX.

Not to be too-quaint.

It's better to be reserved. To know more than is needfull, is to blunt the edge of wit, seeing subtilties, commonly, are easily crackt. Truth well authorized is surer. It is good to have understanding, but not a flux at the mouth. Too much reasoning looks like jangling. A solid judgment that reasons no more than what is fit, is much better.

MAX.

MAXIME CCXL.

To know how to play the Ignorant.

The ablest man sometimes acts this part : and there are occasions, when the best knowledge is to pretend not to know. One must not be ignorant, but onely pretend to be so. It signifies little to be knowing with Fops, and Prudent with Fools. We are to speak to every man according to his Character. He is not the ignorant who pretends to be such, but he that is catch'd by such. Not he that counterfeits, but he that really is so. The onely way to be beloved, is to put on the skin of the silliest of Animals.

MAXIME CCXLI.

To suffer railery, but not to use it.

The one is a kind of Gallantry ; the other a sort of Engagement. He that is off of the hinges when people are rejoycing, has much, and shews still more of the nature of a Beast. Jocoseness is diverting. He that can suffer it, passes for a man of great stock : whereas he that is netled at it, provokes others to nettle him

him the more. The best way is to let it pass without making too much on't. The greatest truths have always come from raillery. There is nothing that demands more circumspection nor skill. Before one begin, he ought to know the reach of him, with whom he intends to make himself merry.

MAXIME CCXLII.

To pursue ones point.

There are some onely good for beginning, who never bring any thing to an end. They invent, but they prosecute not, so inconstant is their mind. They never acquire Reputation, because they never proceed to a period. These always end by stopping short. In others, that comes from impatience, and it is the fault of the *Spaniards*, as patience is the vertue of the *Flemings*. These see the end of affairs, and affairs see the end of those. They sweat till they have overcome the difficulty, and then rest content that they have weathered it. They know not how to make the best of their victory. They shew that they can, but that they will not. But after all, it is still a fault either of inability, or levity. If the design be good,
why

224 *The Courtiers Manual Oracle, or,*
why should it not be accomplished? if it
be bad, why begun? let a man of parts
then, kill his game, and let him not stop
at starting of it.

MAXIME CCXLIII.

Not to be a Dove in all things.

Let the cunning of the Serpent go in
course with the simplicity of the Dove.
There is nothing easier than to deceive a
good man. He that never lies, easily be-
lieves; and he that never deceives, confides
much. To be deceived is not always a
sign of brutishness: For goodness is some-
times the cause of it. There are two sorts
of people that well knew how to prevent
a mischief, the one, because they have
learnt what it is at their own cost; and
the others, because they have learnt it at
the expence of others. Prudence ought
then to be as carefull to caution it self, as
cunning is to cheat. Have a care not to
be so good a man, that others may take
occasion from it of being bad. Be a
composition of the Dove and Serpent;
not a Monster, but a Prodigy.

MAX-

MAXIME CCXLIV.

To know how to oblige.

Some so well metamorphose favours, that it seems they doe them, even when they receive them. There are men of such parts, that they oblige by asking, because they transform their own interest into anothers honour.) They so adjust matters, that one would say, others discharged their duty, when they grant them what they ask, so dextrous they are in inverting the order of obligations by a singular knack of Policy. At least they make it doubtfull who it is that obliges. They buy the best thing with praises: and when they insinuate a desire to have it, it is thought an honour to bestow it. For they ingage Civility by making that a debt, which ought to be the cause of their thankfulness. Thus they change the obligation from passive to active, being better Politicians than Grammarians. That, in reality, is a great dexterity: but it would be a greater still to see into it, and to baulk such a foolish bargain, by giving them back their Civilities, and every one re-taking his own.

Q

MAX.

MAXIME CCXLV.

To reason sometimes quite contrary to the mobile.

That shews a high mind. A great Genius ought not to esteem those who never contradict him. For that's no mark of their affection to him, but of their love to themselves. Let him have a care of being the fop to flattery by answering it any otherwise, than with the contempt which it deserves. Let him even take it for an honour to be censured by some people, and particularly by those, who speak ill of all good men. Let it vex him, if his actions please all sorts of men, seeing that's a sign that they are not such as they ought to be: what is perfect being observed but of a very few.

MAXIME CCXLVI.

Never to give satisfaction to those who demand none.

To give even too much to those who demand it, is a blameable action. To make an excuse before it be time, is to
accuse

accuse ones self. To be let blood, when one is in health, is a signal for a sickness to come. An anticipated excuse awakens a discontent that slept. A Prudent Man ought not to seem sensible of another's suspicion, because that is to court his resentment. He ought onely endeavour to cure that suspicion by a sincere and civil deportment.

MAXIME CCXLVII.

To know a little more, and to live a little less.

Others on the contrary say, that honest leisure is better than much business. Nothing is ours, but time, which even they, who have no fixt habitation enjoy. It is an equal misfortune to employ the pretious time of life in mechanical exercises, or in the hurry of great affairs. One is not to load himself neither with business, nor envy. That's to live, and yet be choak't in a Croud. Some extend this precept even to Sciences. But not to know, is not to live. *See Maxime 4.*

MAXIME CCXLVIII.

Not to put off to the last.

There are men of a last impression, (for impertinence runs always upon extremes.) They have a mind and a will of wax. The last applies the Seal, and effaces all the others. These men are never gained, because with the same facility they are lost. Every body gives them a tincture. They are the worst confidants in the world. They are Children as long as they live: and as such, they onely float in the ebb and flood of their opinions and passions, always lame both in will and judgment, because they toss themselves now to one side, and by and by again to the other.

MAXIME CCXLIX.

Not to begin to live, where we should leave off.

Some take their ease in the beginning, and leave the pains to the latter end. What is substantial ought to go first, and the accessory after, if there be place for that. Others would triumph, before they

they fight. Some again begin their knowledge by what least concerns them, delaying the study of things that might prove usefull and honourable unto them, till life is like to fail. Hardly hath such a man begun to make his fortune, but he is gone, or going. The method is equally necessary both for knowing and living.

MAXIME CCL.

When must one reason the contrary way.

When men speak to us with a design to surprize us. With some people every thing ought to be taken in a contrary sense. The *yea* is the *no*, and the *no* the *yea*. To undervalue a thing is a sign one esteems it: seeing he that would have it for himself, depretiates it to others. To praise is not always to speak good: for some, that they may not praise the good, affect to commend the bad. He that thinks no body bad, will think no man good.

MAXIME CCLI.

We are to use Humane means, as if there were none Divine; and Divine means, as if there were none Humane.

It is the precept of a great Master, and needs no Commentary.

MAXIME CCLII.

Not altogether for thy self, nor altogether for others neither.

Both the one and the other is an insupportable Tyranny. To be altogether for ones self, infers necessarily, that one would have all to himself. These men cannot part with an ace of any thing that's convenient for them. They oblige little, they trust to their Fortune, but commonly that support fails them. It is good sometimes to forsake our selves for the sake of others, to the end others may do so for us. Whoever is in publick place, is by duty a publick Servant. Otherwise it will be said to him, what the old Woman said once to *Adrian* the Emperour: *Renounce then thy place, as thou dost thy duty.* On the contrary, others are altogether

together for others. For folly runs always to excess, and is very unlucky in that particular. They have not a day, nor so much as an hour for themselves, and they are so little their own men, that there was one who was called *Every bodies man*. They are not themselves even in the understanding. For they know for all, and are ignorant for themselves. Let a man of sense consider, that it is not he who is courted, but an interest that is in him, or depends upon him.

MAXIME CCLIII.

Not to be too intelligible.

Most part do not esteem what they conceive, but admire what they understand not. Things must cost somewhat, that they may be valued. One will pass for an able man, when he is not understood. He is to appear always more prudent, and intelligent than is needfull, with him to whom he speaks; but with proportion rather than excess. And though good sense be of great weight amongst knowing men, yet sublimity is necessary to please the most part. We must take from them the means of censuring, by busying their minds in conceiving. Ma-

232 *The Courtiers Manual Oracle, or,*
ny praise that which they can give no
reason for, when it is asked them: be-
cause they reverence as a mystery all that
is hard to be comprehended, and extoll it,
by reason they hear it extolled.

MAXIME CCLIV.

Not to slight the evil, because it is little.

For an evil never comes all alone. Evils,
as well as blessings hang together as by
links. Happiness and misery attend those
commonly who have most of either : and
thence it is, that all avoid the unhappy,
and court the fortunate. Doves them-
selves, for all their simplicity, rest on the
fairest Pidgeon House. Every thing goes
wrong with the unfortunate man, he is
wanting to himself, in losing the favoura-
ble gale. Misfortune, when asleep, is not
to be awakened. A slippery step is no
great matter, and yet it hath occasioned
a fatal fall, from which one could not tell
how to recover. For as no good is per-
fect, so is there no evil neither at its high-
est pitch. That which proceeds from
Heaven above, requires patience ; and
that which arises from the world below,
Prudence.

MAX-

MAXIME CCLV.

To doe small kindnesſes at a time, but often.

Engagement ſhould never exceed Ability. Whoever gives much, does not give but ſell. Gratitude is not to be overloaded. For he that finds himſelf in an impoſſibility to make ſatisfaction, will break off the Correſpondence. The way to loſe many Friends, is exceſſively to oblige them. Being unable to re-pay, they withdraw, and from being obliged, turn Enemies. A ſtatue would be willing never to ſee its maker, nor the obliged his benefactor. The beſt method in giving, is to order things ſo, that it coſt but little, and that that little be earneſtly deſired, to the end it may be the more eſteemed.

MAXIME CCLVI.

To be always in a readineſs to ward the blows of Clowns, Opiniatours, proud Perſons, and of all other Impertinents.

There are a great many ſuch to be met with, and it is Prudence never to come to a bruſh with them: Let a wiſe man dayly look in the glaſs of reflexion, that
he

234 *The Courtiers Manual Oracle, or,*
he may see the need he hath of arming
himself with resolution, and by that
means he will disappoint all the jirks of
folly. If he think seriously on that, he'll
never expose himself to the ordinary
risques that men run into, by engaging
with Fools. A man armed with Pru-
dence, will never be baffled by imperti-
nence. The Navigation of civil life is
dangerous, because it is full of Rocks, on
which Reputation splits. The surest way
is to turn aside, taking lessons of cunning
from *Ulysses*. Here an artifice defeat
does great service. But above all, save
thy self by thy wit. For that's the shor-
test way of making the best of a bad bar-
gain.

MAXIME CCLVII.

Never to come to a Rupture.

For Reputation by so doing comes al-
ways off shattered. Any man is suffici-
ent to be an Enemy, but not a Friend.
Few are in a condition of doing good, but
all almost can doe mischief. The Eagle
is not secure in the armes of *Jupiter* him-
self, if it offend the Beetle. Secret En-
emies that lie upon the watch, blow the
fire, when they see the War declared.
Friends

Friends that quarrel, become the worst Enemies. They reckon their own choice amongst other mens faults. Spectatours of the rupture speak severally of it, as they think, and think what they desire. They condemn both parties either for want of foresight in the beginning, or of patience in the end, but always of Prudence. If the rupture be inevitable, it ought at least to be excusable. An indifference would doe better than a violent declaration. On this occasion, a handsome retreat is honourable.

MAXIME CCLVIII.

*To look out for one that may help to carry
the burthen of adversity.*

Be never alone, especially in dangers. Else thou wilt charge thy self with all the hatred. Some think to raise themselves by taking upon them the whole oversight of businesses, and they attract to themselves all the envy : whereas with a companion one secures himself against the evil, or at least bears but part of it. Neither fortune nor the whimsy of the people can play so easily upon two. The skillfull Physician, who hath not succeeded in the cure of his Patient, never fails to
take

236 *The Courtiers Manual Oracle, or,*
take the assistance of another, who under the name of consultation, helps him to bear up the Pall. Divide then the office and trouble of it: for it is intolerable to suffer alone.

MAXIME CCLIX.

To prevent offences, and turn them into favours.

There is more dexterity in shunning, than in revenging them. It is great address to make a confident of him, who might have been an Adversary; and to transform those into butteresses of Reputation, who threatned to ruine the same. It is of great use to know how to oblige. To prevent an injury by a favour, is to intercept its course: and it is great skill in living, to change that which was like to cause nothing but discontent into pleasure. Place then thy confidence in malevolence it self.

MAXIME CCLX.

Thou shalt never be wholly at the devotion of any one, nor any one at thine.

Neither is bloud, friendship, nor the strictest obligation sufficient for that. For
it

it must be another-guess interest that can oblige one to abandon his heart and will. The greatest union admits of exception, and without prejudice too to the laws of most intimate Friendship. The Friend always reserves some secret, and the Son conceals somewhat even from the Father. Some things are made mysteries to some, and yet communicated to others; and contrariwise: so that a man resigns or refuses himself wholly, according to the distinction he makes of those of his Correspondence.

MAXIME CCLXI.

Not to continue a Foppery.

Some make an engagement of their mistakes: when they have once begun to fail, they think they are concerned in honour to continue. Their heart accuses their fault, and their mouth defends it. Whence it happens, that if they have been taxed for inadvertency, when they began the foppery, they pass for fools, when they continue it. An imprudent proneness, and a rash resolution, impose no obligation. Thus, some continue their first foolery, and make their
Illness

238 *The Courtiers Manual Oracle, or,*
filliness the more remarkable, by a vanity in appearing constant impertinents. See the *Maxime* 214.

MAXIME CCLXII.

To know how to forget.

That's a happiness rather than an art. Those things are best remembered which ought most to be forgotten. The memory hath not onely the incivility to fail one in time of need, but also the impertinence, to be unseasonably officious. In all that's like to be troublesome, it is prodigal ; and barren in every thing that might give pleasure. Sometimes the remedy of the evil consists in forgetting it, and we forget the remedy. Memory then must be accustomed to take another course, because it is it that can give us either a Paradise or a Hell. I except those who live contentedly. For in their state of Innocence they enjoy the felicity of Idiots.

MAX:

MAXIME CCLXIII.

Many things that serve for pleasure, ought not to be peculiar.

One enjoys more of what ~~is~~ another's, than of what belongs to himself. The first day is for the Master, and all the rest for Strangers. One doubly enjoys what belongs to others, that's to say, not onely without fear of loss, but also with the pleasure of Novelty. Privation makes every thing better. The water of another man's Well is as delicious as Nectar. Besides that possession lessens the pleasure of enjoyment, it augments the trouble, whether in lending, or in not lending. It serves onely to preserve things for another : and over and above, the number of the discontented is always greater, than of the thankfull.

MAXIME CCLXIV.

To be at no time careles.

Lot takes pleasure in surprize. It will let slip a thousand occasions to take its men one day napping. Wit, Prudence and Courage ought to be upon the guard,
and

240 *The Courtiers Manual Oracle, or,*
and in like manner beauty, inasmuch as
the day of its confidence, will be that of
the loss of its credit. The *Who thought*
on't is the trip that turns up the heels.
Besides, it is an ordinary trick of others
malice to lay a snare for good qualities,
that they may be more rigorously sifted.
The days of ostentation are well known,
and cunning pretends not to mind it: but
it chuses the day when one least expects,
to make a tryal of what one is able to
doe:

MAXIME CCLXV.

To know how to engage ones Dependents.

A pat engagement hath put a great many men in credit, just as a ship-wreck makes good swimmers. By that, many have displayed their industry and ability, which would have lain buried in their retirement, if occasion had not presented. Difficulties and dangers are the causes and spurs of Reputation. A great courage, in the occasions of honour, does as much service as a thousand others. Queen *Isabelle of Castile*, knew eminently that lesson of engaging, as well as all others: and the great Captain *Gonsalvo* owed all his Reputation to that politick
Address.

Address, which was the cause also, that many others became great men.

MAXIME OCLXVI.

To be too good, is to be naught.

He is so, who is never angry. Insensible men are scarcely men. That quality proceeds not always from indolency, but often from incapacity. To resent when it is proper, is the action of a complete man. Birds at first sight scorn your carved figures. To mingle the sharp with the sweet, is the sign of a good relish. Sweetness alone is onely for Children and Idiots. It's a great misfortune to fall into that insensibility, by being too good natured.

That man, says he, in the seventh Critick of the third part of his Criticon, is one of those who are called insensible; of those people, whom nothing can alter, and who are not concerned at any thing; not so much as at the greatest reverse of fortune, nor the imperfection of their own nature, nor yet the home-thrusts of malice. The whole world may conspire against them, it's all one to them; it will neither spoil their Appetite, nor break their sleep. And that they call indolence, nay, great courage too. R MAX-

MAXIME CCLXVII.

Silken words.

Arrows pierce the body, and bad words the soul. A good humour makes a good tongue. It's a great art in life to know how to sell air. Words answer almost every thing, and nothing is impossible for them. Men negotiate in the air, and with the air: and a strong breath lasts long. The mouth must always be full of sugar to sweeten the words. For Enemies themselves can then relish them. The onely way to be amiable is to be affable. *See the end of the Commentary of the Maxime 14.*

MAXIME CCLXVIII.

The Wise Man ought to doe in the beginning, What the Fool does in the end.

Both doe the same thing: the difference is that the one does it in season, and the other out of season. He, who in the beginning has his mind wrong set, continues to be so in all the rest. He draws with his foot what he should carry on his head; he makes his right hand his left: so that he is left-handed in all his Conduct. After all, it always happens, that they doe by force what they might have

have done of their own accord : whereas the wise man sees what is to be done timely and at leisure, and puts it in execution with pleasure and Reputation.

MAXIME CCLXIX.

To make the best of ones being new.

So long as it lasts, one will be esteemed. It generally takes because of variety, which pleases the palate. An ordinary thing, but spick and span new, is more valued, than a rarity that is seen often. Excellences wear out and soon grow old. That glory of Novelty will not last long, it's but a nine days wonder. Make use then of the first fruits of Esteem, by gaining speedily all that thou can'st pretend to from a transient complaisance. For if once the fresh gloss be gone, the passion will cool, and that which pleased as being new, will cloy as being common. Every thing hath had its time, and then been slighted.

MAXIME CCLXX.

Not to condemn singly what pleaseth many.

For there must be some good in it, when

244 *The Courtiers Manual Oracle, or,*
so many are content with it : and though
it be not told what it is, yet it is known
and enjoyed. Singularity is always odi-
ous, and when ill grounded, ridiculous.
It disgraces rather the person than the ob-
ject. So that one will be left alone with
his whimsical palate. Let him that is not
able to discern the good conceal the weak-
ness of his judgment, and not meddle in
condemning at random. For a bad dis-
cerning springs from ignorance. What
all men say, is, or would be so.

MAXIME CCLXXI.

*Let him that knows but little in his pro-
fession, stick to what he knows best.*

For if he be not reckoned quaint, at
least he'll be reckoned solid. He that
knows, may engage, and doe at his plea-
sure: but to know little, and to run a
risque, is a voluntary precipice. Hold
always to the surer side. What is au-
thorized cannot fail. For a weak know-
ledge a beaten path : and besides, securi-
ty is better than singularity, not onely
for the knowing, but also for the igno-
rant.

MAX-

MAXIME CCLXXII.

To sell things as Courtesie thinks fit to value them.

That's the way to oblige the more. The selfish demand of the interested man will never equal the good grace of a generous obliged heart in giving. Courtesie does not give, but engage; and the gallant way of it renders the obligation the greater. Nothing costs an honest man dearer, than what is frankly given him. It is to sell it to him twice, and at two different rates, the one at the worth of the thing, and the other at the value of the Generosity. It's true, however, that Gallantry is not a Commodity for the use of sneaking beggarly fellows, because they know not what it is to live like men.

MAXIME CCLXXIII.

Thoroughly to know the temper of those with whom we have to doe.

The effect is soon known, when once the cause is known. It is known first in it self, and then its motive. The melan-

246 *The Courtiers Manual Oracle, or,*
choly person always presages misfortunes, and the back-biter faults. The worst runs always in their heads; and as they see not the present good, so they denounce future evils that may or may not happen. A man prepossessed with passion, speaks always in a style different to what things are. Passion and not reason speaks in him; every one judges according to his caprice or humour, and no body according to truth. Learn then to unmask a counterfeit shew, and to spell out the characters of the heart. Study with thy self, to know him that always laughs without reason; and him that never laughs but when he should. Distrust an asker of many questions as an impertinent, or a spy. Seldom expect good from those who have any natural deformity in body. For it is usual with them to be revenged of Nature in doing her as little honour as she hath done to them. Commonly silliness bears proportion to beauty.

MAXIME CCLXXIV.

To have the gift of pleasing.

Civility is a strong political magick. It is a gentile hook, to be used rather for attracting

tracting hearts, than drawing in of profit; or rather, indeed, for all things. Merit will not doe the work, if it be not seconded by agreeableness, on which depends all the plausibility of actions. This agreeableness is the most efficacious instrument of Sovereignty. There is a luck in't to put others into appetite: yet Artifice contributes to that also. In all things where there is much of Nature, Art always succeeds best. From thence springs that unaccountable *somewhat*, which gains universal favour.

MAXIME CCLXXV.

To conform to common Custome, but not to common Folly.

Be not always starched in thy gravity, it's part of Gallantry to dispence with a little *decorum* for gaining the common good will. Sometimes we may doe as others have done, and still without indecency. He that is taken for a fool in publick, will never be reckoned a Wise Man in private. There is more lost in one day of liberty, than gained by a long course of seriousness. But one must not always be for exception neither. To be singular is to condemn others. And it's

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worse still to affect sanctified looks. That's
to be left to the Women. Nay, some-
times your Godly render themselves ridi-
culous. It is the best of a man to appear
like a man. A Woman may with grace-
fullness affect a manly air, but a Man
cannot without disparagement take upon
him that of a Woman.

MAXIME CCLXXVI.

*To be able to retrieve ones Genius by Na-
ture and by Art.*

Man, they say, changes his temper
once in seven years. In a good time, if
it be for the better. In the first seven
years reason comes to him. Let him so
order things, that at every change he
may acquire some new perfection. He
ought to observe that natural revolution,
that he may second it, and advance still
farther and farther in the sequel. Thus
many have changed their Conduct, as
well in their condition, as employment.
And sometimes it is not perceived, till the
greatness of the alteration be observed.
At twenty years of age a Peacock; at
thirty a Lion; at forty a Camel; at fifty
a Serpent; at sixty a Dog; at seventy
an Ape; at fourscore nothing at all.

This

This Allegory is explained in the discourse 56 of the Authour's Agudeza, in these terms.

Man, because of the dignity of his Nature, thinking that he ought to be immortal, ask't *Jupiter*, how long he was to live, *Jupiter* made answer, That when he resolved to create all Animals, and then man, he had proposed to allow every one of them thirty years of life. Man was surprized to hear that so wonderfull a piece of Workmanship, as he was, had been made to last so short a time, and that his life must pass like a flower. He thought it strange, that being scarcely come out of his Mother's Womb, he was to enter into that of the Earth, without enjoying the pleasant state, wherein he was created. I beseech thee then, said he, O *Jupiter*, (if it be so that my desire be not contrary to thy Decrees) that since all the Animals unworthy of thy favours, have refused twenty years of the term of life, which thou hast given them, being ignorant of the good thou didst them, as being destitute of reason: it would please thee to grant them to me, that I may live them in their stead, and that thou mayst be better served by me. *Jupiter* finding the desire reasonable, allowed it: so that having lived his own thirty years, he should
begin

begin to live, first, the twenty years, that the Ass yielded, on condition that he should perform all its duties, in labouring, carting, drawing, and carrying to the House all that was necessary for Husbandry. That from fifty to seventy years of age he should live the twenty years of the Dog, barking, and growling, as having many troubles, and no pleasure in any thing. And that at length from seventy to ninety he should accomplish the years of the Ape, in imitating the defects of Nature. So we see that they who come to that age, are accustomed, as old as they are, to affect to seem young, to dress and spruce up themselves, and to use the exercises of Youth, that they may seem to be what they are not; as also to play with Children, as Apes doe.

He says the very same thing almost in the last Chapter of his *Discreet*. Thirty years, says he, were given to man for enjoyment and rejoycing; twenty were lent him upon his word, for labouring; twenty more of the Dog for barking; and the last twenty to play and fool with little Children, like Apes.

MAXIME CCLXXVII.

The man of true Ostentation.

That Talent gives luster to all others, every thing hath its time, and that time is to be watched. For every day is not a day of triumph. There are some men of a particular Character, in whom little appears to be much, and the much makes them admired. When excellence concurs with stallage, it passes for a Prodigy. There are ostentative Nations, and the Spanish with the first. The shew stands in stead of much, and particularly, if reality vouch for it. Heaven, which gives perfection, bespeaks ostentation; for without it all perfection would be under constraint. Art must goe along with Ostentation. The excellentest things depend on circumstances, and by consequent are not always in season. Whenever Ostentation comes unseasonably, it succeeds ill. Nothing admits less of affectation, and that's the rock that Ostentation always splits upon, because it borders near upon vanity, and vanity is very subject to contempt. It hath need of great moderation, that it may not be offensive. For the too much of it hath
already

252 *The Courtiers Manual Oracle, or,*
already discredited it amongst men of parts.
Sometimes it consists in a dumb Elo-
quence, and in shewing perfection with-
out design. For a wise dissimulation
makes a plausible Parade; the same pri-
vation exciting curiosity the more. Its
greatest art is, not to shew all its perfecti-
on at once, but by degrees, and as if one
were a-painting of it, to discover it the
more. A lovely pattern ought to oblige
men to shew somewhat still more lovely,
and the applause given to the first piece,
makes the Spectatours impatient to see
the rest.

*This Maxime is taken from the Au-
thour's Apologue, entituled, Hombre de
Ostentation, the Abstract whereof shall
serve for a Commentary.*

What is not seen, saith he, is as if it
were not in being. All knowledge is no-
thing, if others are ignorant of that thou
knowest, said a great Satyrift.

*Scire tuum nihil est, nisi te scire hoc sciat
(alter. Pers.*

Things go not for what they are, but
for what they appear to be. There are
many more fops than men of wit. Those
are satisfied with appearance; and though
these stick to the substance, yet deceit
pre-

prevails, and makes all things to be valued according to the outside. *And a page after.* Know, said the Ambassadors of the other Birds, to the Peacock, that all our Re-publick is offended at thy insupportable Pride. For it is an odious piece of singularity in thee, that thou alone must spread thy vain tail before the Sun, which no other Bird dares to doe, though there be many that have better right to doe it than thou hast. And therefore thou art commanded by an irrevocable sentence, to abstain for the future from signalizing thy self, &c. To which the Peacock made answer: Why do you condemn in me the Ostentation, and not the Beauty? Heaven that hath bestowed this upon me, hath in like manner complemented me with the other. What would reality signifie to me without shew? Politicians now a-days moot nothing else, but that the greatest Wisdom consists in making it appear. To know, and to know how to set it off, is doubly to know. For my own part, I would say of Ostentation, what others say of good fortune, that an ounce of Ostentation is better than pounds of capacity without it. What signifies it, though a thing be excellent, if it appear not? *And two pages after.* It is a politick Probleme, whe-

whether or not reality be better than appearance. There are things great in themselves, which appear not, and others that are inconsiderable, which appear much. So great effect produces the having or wanting Ostentation. There are men in whom the little makes a great shew, and whose *much* is a subject of admiration. These are men of Parade; for when excellence and appearance concur, they form a Prodigy. On the contrary, we have seen eminent persons, who have not appeared to be one half of what they were, for want of the dexterity of Ostentation. It is not long since, that a great Man, who in the field drove all before him, being called to a Council of War, was afraid of every body. He, that was so proper for action, was not at all for speaking. Ostentation gives a true lustre to Heroick Qualities, and, as it were, a second being to all things: that's to say, if reality vouch for it. For without merit, it is but a vulgar cheat: it serves onely to manifest defects, and by consequent to beget contempt instead of applause. Some make a great bustle to get out and appear upon the Theatre of the World, and all they doe is to publish the ignorance, which retirement civilly concealed. But that is not to make Ostentation

tation of Talents, but foppishly to declare ones faults.

MAXIME CCLXXVIII.

In all things to avoid being remarkable.

By being so too much, perfections themselves will be defects. This comes of singularity, and singularity hath always been censured,. Whoever affects to be singular, must live by himself. Politeness it self is ridiculous, if it be excessive; it offends, when it glares too much to the Eye. Upon much stronger reason ought extravagant singularities to be nauseous. Nevertheless some would be known even by their vices to that degree, that they seek out Novelty in wickedness, and glory in having so bad a Reputation. Nay, in the matter of ability it self, the *too much* degenerates into quack-
ing.

MAXIME CCLXXIX.

To suffer Contradiction without Gain-saying.

It is to be distinguished when Contradiction proceeds from Cunning or Clownishness. For it is not always an Opinio-
native-

256 *The Courtiers Manual Oracle, or,*
nativeness, sometimes it is Artifice. Take
heed then not to engage into the one, nor
to stumble into the other. There is no
pains better bestowed than in spying: nor no
better counter-battery against those, who
would pick the lock of the heart, than to
put the key of reserve in the inside. See
the Maxime 179.

MAXIME CCLXXX.

The man of good stuff.

Honesty and integrity are gone: obligations are forgotten. There are but few good Correspondences. The best service has the worst reward. This is the guise of the World now a-days. There are whole Nations enclined to evil. Of the one, the treachery is always to be feared; of others the inconstancy; and of some the cheating. Make use then of the bad Correspondence of others, not as an example to be imitated; but as a warning to be upon thy guard. Integrity runs a risque of being warped at the sight of a dishonest procedure; but a good man never forgets what he himself is, because of what others are.

MAX-

MAXIME CCLXXXI.

The approbation of knowing Men.

An indifferent yea of a great man is more to be valued than the applause of a multitude. When there is a bone in the wind-pipe, to snuffle is not to breath. The wise speak with judgment, and by consequent, their approbation gives complete satisfaction. Prudent *Antigonus* placed his whole Renown in the single testimony of *Zeno*. And *Plato* called *Aristotle* his whole School. Some mind onely the filling of their Bellies, without minding that the Commons are but ordinary. Sovereigns themselves stand in need of good Writers, whose Pens are more to be feared by them, than a Picture to the life, by the ugly.

MAXIME CCLXXXII.

To make absence an expedient, for being respected, or esteemed.

If presence lessen Reputation, absence encreases it. He who being absent is taken for a Lion, appears but a Mouse, when present. Perfections lose their lustre, if they be lookt upon at too near
S distance :

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distance : because men look more upon
the back of the outside, than the substance
and inside of the mind. Imagination
goes much farther than the sight : and the
mistake that commonly enters by the
Ears, goes out by the Eyes. He that
rests in the centre of the good Opinion,
that People have of him, preserves his Re-
putation. The Phoenix it self makes use
of retirement and desire, to make it self
to be the more esteemed and regrated.

MAXIME COLXXXIII.

The Man of good invention.

Invention marks a fruitfulness of wit.
But where is it to be found without a
grain of folly ? Invention is the share of
quick wits, and the good choice that of so-
lid judgments. The former is rarer, and
more esteemed, inasmuch as many have
succeeded in chusing well, and very few
in inventing well, and in having the pre-
cedency of excellence, as well as that of
time. Novelty is insinuant, and if it be
happy, it sets a double value upon what
is good. In matters that concern judg-
ment, it is dangerous, because it runs up-
on Paradoxes ; in knacks of subtilty it is
laudable : and if Novelty and invention
jump

jump well together, they are plausible.

MAXIME CCLXXXIV.

*Meddle not in other mens business, and
thine own will go well.*

Esteem thy self, if thou wouldst be esteemed. Be rather covetous than prodigal of thy self. Make thy self to be desired, and thou shalt be well received. Never come till thou be called, and never go till thou be sent. He that engages of his own head, incurs all the hatred, if he succeed not; and though he succeed, he is not liked the better for it. A man that is too intriguing, is the But of contempt: and as he introduces himself without shame, he is repulsed with confusion.

MAXIME CCLXXXV.

Not to lose ones self with another.

Know, that he who is in the mire, calls thee not, but to comfort himself at thy cost, when thou art bemired with him. The unfortunate look out for some body, to help them to bear their affliction. He who in prosperity turned his back, will in adversity stretch forth his hand. Con-

260 *The Courtiers Manual Oracle, or,*
sider well that thou mayst not be drow-
ned, by endeavouring to help those who
are a-drowning.

MAXIME CCLXXXVI.

*Suffer not thy self to be obliged, nor by all
sorts of People.*

For that would be to become a com-
mon slave. Some are born to be more
happy than others ; the first for doing of
good, and the others for receiving it. Li-
berty is more pretious than all gifts : and
to receive, is to lose it. It is better to
keep others in dependance, than to de-
pend upon one alone. The onely advan-
tage of Sovereignty is, that it can doe
more good. Above all, have a care not
to reckon any obligation as a favour. Be
persuaded, that men most commonly
seek to oblige, that they may engage.

MAXIME CCLXXXVII.

Never to act in passion.

Otherwise, all will be spoil'd. Let
him that is not himself, have a care not
to doe any thing by himself. For passion
always banishes reason. Let him then
substi-

substitute a prudent Mediatour, who will be so, if he be without passion. Standers-by judge better than the Gamesters, because they fall not into passion. When one finds himself moved, retentiveness should beat the retreat, lest the choler may be more heated. For then every thing would be done violently, and by some minutes of fury, one would prepare to himself a subject of long repentance, and great repining.

MAXIME CCLXXXVIII.

To live according to occasion.

Whether it be action, or discourse, all ought to be squared according to the time. We must resolve; when we can, for Time and Tide stays for no man. Regulate not thy life by general Maximes, unless it be in favour of Vertue. Prescribe no positive laws to thy will: for thou wilt be forced next day to drink of the same water which thou despisest to day. Some mens impertinence is so whimsical, that they would have all the circumstances of a project quadrate to their madness, instead of accommodating themselves to circumstances. But a Wise Man knoweth that to conform to the

262 *The Courtiers Manual Oracle, or,*
times, is the North Star of Prudence.

MAXIME CCLXXXIX.

*What most discredits a Man, is to shew
that he is man.*

He is no longer reckoned Divine, so soon as he is known to have much in him of man. Levity is the greatest counterpoise of Reputation. As a grave man passes for more than man, so a light shittcock is hardly reckoned a man. No vice discredits so much as levity, inasmuch as it is diametrically opposed to gravity. A light man cannot be substantial, and especially if he be old, seeing his age requires more Prudence. And though this fault be very common, yet it is strangely derived in every particular person that has it.

• MAXIME CCXC.

It's a happiness to join esteem with affection.

To be respected, there is no need to be too much beloved. Love is bolder than hatred. Affection and veneration seldom agree together. And though it is not fit to be too much feared, yet neither
is

is it good to be too much beloved. Love begets familiarity, and as fast as this comes in, esteem goes out. It is better to be loved with respect, than with tenderness. That is the love which great men require.

MAXIME CCXCI.

To know how to make an essay.

Let the address of a Judicious man counterbalance the reservedness of a cunning man. A great Judgment is required to measure the capacity of another. It's far better to know the character of minds, than the virtue of herbs and stones. That is one of the greatest secrets of life: Metals are known by their sound, and Men by their talk. Integrity is known by words, but much more by deeds. In this, much penetration, circumspection and caution is required.

MAXIME CCXCII.

To be above, and not below ones Employment.

How great soever the station be, he who holds it, should shew himself still to

be greater. A man that hath wherewith, is still growing, and signalizes himself more and more in his employments: whereas he that hath a narrow heart, is soon at a stand, and is at length reduced to an inability of performing his obligations, and maintaining his Reputation. *Augustus* made it his honour to be a greater Man than Prince. A great heart, and a reasonable confidence in ones self are of great use here.

MAXIME CCXCIII.

Of Maturity.

It's conspicuous in the garb, but much more in the manners. Material gravity makes Gold pretious, and Moral the Man. That gravity is the ornament of Qualities, through the veneration that it attracts to them. The outside of Man is the frontispiece of the Soul. Maturity is not a dull look, nor an affectation of demure gestures, as Dunces say; but a well weighed Authority. It speaks by sentences, and acts always to the purpose. It supposes a complete man, that's to say, who is as much a great person, as a mature man. So soon as a man ceases to be a Child, he begins to be grave, and to shew his value.

MAX.

MAXIME CCXCIV.

To be moderate in ones Opinions.

All judge according to their interests, and abound in their own sense. Most men make reason give way to passion. Let two be of a contradictory Opinion, yet each presumes to have reason on his side. But reason that hath always been faithfull, hath never had two faces. A Wise Man is to reflect upon so nice a point : and thereby, his doubting will correct the head-strongness of others. Let him sometimes go to his adversaries side, that he may examine what he grounds upon, and that will hinder him from condemning him, and so easily arrogating to himself the victory.

MAXIME CCXCV.

To be, and not seem to be a man of business.

Those who have least to doe, would appear to be loaded with affairs. They make a mystery of every thing, and that with the greatest silliness imaginable. These are Cameleons of applause, but are heartily laughed at by every body.

Vanity

Vanity is insupportable every where, but here it is flouted at. These little Pismires of honour go a-begging the glory of great exploits. Shew as little as thou canst thy most eminent qualities. Rest satisfied to doe, and leave it to others to talk of it. Give thy good actions, but sell them not. Golden Pens must never be hired to write upon dirt; which is an Eye-sore to all men of sense. Strive rather to be a *Heroe*, than to shew it.

Those, (says he in the Chapter of his *Discreet*, entituled *Hazasleria*) pretend to most business, who have least, because they go a-hunting after occasions, and magnifie them. They set a great value upon things that are worth less than nothing. They make a mystery of every thing, and the smallest matter is to them a Prodigy. All their affairs are the prime transactions of the world, and all their actions exploits. Their whole life is a train of Miracles, to be published by the Trumpet of Fame. They have nothing that's common, every thing is singular in them, whether it be Valour, Knowledge, or Fortune. All vanity is justly reckoned foppish, but bragging is intolerable. Wise Men make it more their honour to be great, than to appear so. But these men rest satisfied with the bare appearance.

rance. To love to appear is so far from being a mark of sublimity in them, that on the contrary it is a demonstration of a low mind, since the least thing appears as much to them as the greatest. Pride is offensive every where, but chiefly here. They meet with contempt where they look for esteem. When they fantasie to themselves that they will be admired, they find themselves exposed to the derision of all men. Their vanity proceeds not at all from the greatness of Soul, but from the lowness of Heart, seeing they aspire not to true honour, but onely to shews; not to real exploits, but to brag of them, without doing them. There are others, who would seem to be mighty Ministers, great men for magnifying objects, there is no business small as to them, of Atomes they make a great dust, and of a little a great noise. They give themselves out for men overwhelmed in business, and by consequent, desirous of repose and leisure. They speak onely by mystery, their least gesture is a subject of Divination. They make great exclamations, and then, that they may the more surprize, stop short, like to the Machines of *Gianello della Torre*, of as great noise, and as little profit. There is a great deal of difference, nay, and contra-

tra-

trariety betwixt great *Doers*, and great *Talkers*. For the more brave actions the former doe, the less they affect to speak of them. They are satisfied to doe, and leave it to others to tell what they have done ; and though others should be silent, yet the things themselves would sufficiently speak. The second sell at a dear rate, what others give *gratis*. They publish it with sound of Trumpet : and for want of Pens enough amongst those of Fame, they hire golden Pens, (that's to say mercenary Pens) to make them write dirty Characters. *And then he concludes in these terms.* The Pens of Fame are not of Gold, because they are neither to be sold nor hired : but they have a better sound than the finest Silver ; they are of no value ; but they bestow it upon merit. To this may be added what *Diogenes* said one day to a young *bragadocio*, who alledged to him the multitude of his business : *That it became him well to ape the Woman.*

MAXIME CCXCVI.

The man of value, and majestic qualities.

The great qualities make the great men. One of these alone is equivalent to

to all the indifferent put together. Heretofore a man made it his honour to have nothing but what was great in his house, even to the most common utensils. By much stronger reason ought a great man to endeavour that all the qualities of his mind be great. As every thing is immense and infinite in God, so ought all things to be great and majestick in a Heroe. So that all his actions, nay, and all his words should be cloathed with a transcendent majesty.

MAXIME CCXCVII.

To doe all things, as in the presence of witnesses.

That is a man worthy of consideration, who considers that men behold him, or will behold him. He knows that the walls hear, and that wicked actions would rather burst than not get out. Even then when he is alone, he acts as if he were in the presence of all men, because he knows that all things will be known. He looks upon these as present witnesses, who by their discovery will be so afterwards. That man was not afraid that his Neighbours should keep a Register of all he did in his house, who desired that all men might see it.

MAX-

MAXIME CCXCVIII.

*The ready Wit, the profound Judgment,
and the quaint Discerning.*

These three things make a Prodigy, and are the greatest gift of Divine bounty. It is a great advantage to conceive well, a greater to reason well, and above all to have a good understanding. Wit ought not to be in the back-bone, which would render it more painfull than sharp. To think well is the fruit of being rational. At twenty years of age the Will reigns; at thirty the Wit; at forty, the Judgment. There are Wits, which, like the eyes of the *Lynx*, of themselves send forth light, and are most intelligent, when the obscurity is greatest. There are others, who are extemporary, and hit always upon that which is pattest to the purpose. They are always ready furnished, and with what is good too. A most happy fecundity. But a discerning judgment seasons the whole life.

MAX-

MAXIME CCXCIX

To leave with an Appetite.

Men are to be left with the Nectar upon their lips. Desire is the standard of esteem. Even in bodily thirst, it is a skillfull management to provoke it, and not to satiate it wholly. The good is doubly good, when there is but little of it. The abatement is great at the second bout. Too full an enjoyment is dangerous. For it causes the highest perfection to be despised. The onely rule to please is to find an appetite left with a desire. If it be to be provoked, let it rather be by the impatience of longing, than the glut of enjoyment. A felicity that costs pains, gives double contentment.

MAXIME CCC.

In a word, to be Holy.

That is to say all at once. Vertue is the chain of all perfections, and the centre of all felicity. It renders a man prudent, attentive, circumspect, wise, valiant, reserved, sincere, fortunate, plausible, true, and a Heroe in all things. Three things
make

272 *The Courtiers Mannal Oracle, or,*
make him happy, Health, Wisdom, and
Holiness. Vertue is the Sun of the Mi-
crocosme, and a good Conscience is its
Hemisphere. It is so lovely, that it gains
the favour both of Heaven and Earth.
Nothing but it is amiable, and nothing
hatefull but Vice. Vertue is a thing in
good earnest, every thing else is but
mockery. Capacity and Grandure are
to be measured by Vertue, and not
by fortune. Vertue stands in need of
nothing but it self. It renders man
amiable in this life, and memorable af-
ter death.

*Principibus placuisse viris non ultima laus
est.*

*Non cuius homini contingit adire Corin-
thum.*

Hor. Ep. 17. lib. 1. Epist.

T H E E N D.

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